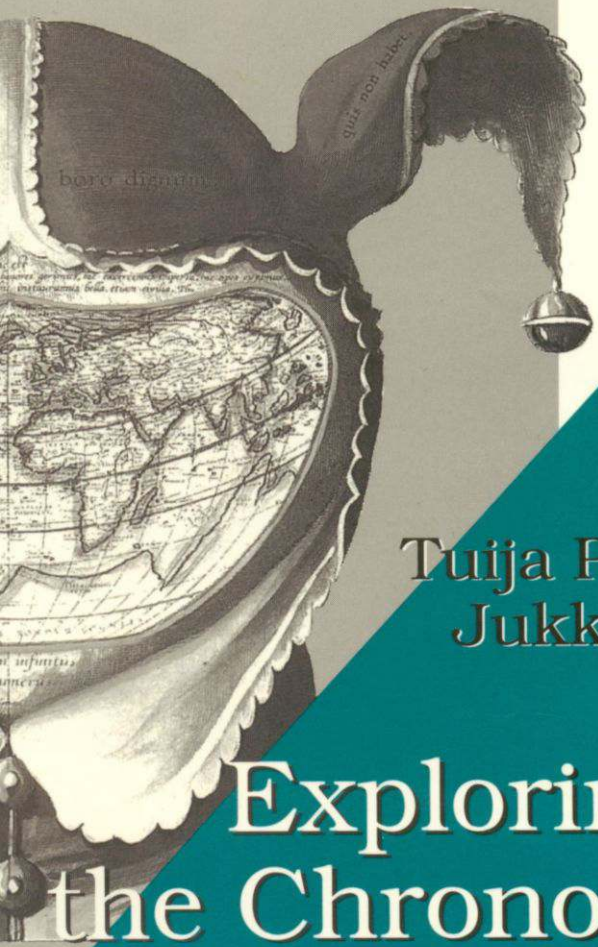
Publications of Social and Political Sciences and Philosophy
University of Jyväskylä



Tuija Parvikko
&
Jukka Kanerva
(eds.)

Exploring the Chronospace of Images

SoPhi

Tuija Parvikko & Jukka Kanerva
(eds.)

Exploring the Chronospace of Images

SoPhi
Publications of Social and Political Sciences and Philosophy 4
University of Jyväskylä

SoPhi
Publications of Social and Political Sciences and Philosophy 4
University of Jyväskylä

SoPhi is a new publication series at the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of Jyväskylä, Finland. SoPhi publishes studies on social policy, sociology, political science and philosophy. Texts are chosen for publication on the basis of expert review.

The editorial board includes Risto Eräsaari (Professor of Social Policy), Kaj Ilmonen (Professor of Sociology), Eeva Jokinen (Research Fellow in Social Policy), Jussi Kotkavirta (Assistant Professor of Philosophy), Eerik Lagerspetz (Professor of Philosophy), Marjatta Marin (Professor of Social Gerontology), Kari Palonen (Professor of Political Science), Tuija Parvikko (Assistant Professor of Political Science), and Juha Virkki (Assistant Professor of Social Policy).

Correspondence should be sent to the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy/Publications, University of Jyväskylä, P.O. Box 35, FIN-40351 Jyväskylä, Finland. Publications can be ordered from Kampus Kirja, Seminaarinkatu 15, FIN-40100 Jyväskylä, Finland (tel. +358-(9)41-603155, fax +358-(9)41-615744, e-mail kkirja@bibelot.jyu.fi).

ISBN 951-34-0744-6
ISSN 1238-8025

Printed at Jyväskylä University Printing House, Jyväskylä, 1996

Cover printed at Jyvässeudun Paino Oy

Cover design by Carita Hyvärinen

Layout by Juha Virkki

Contents

Introduction 1

I The Conquest of the Orbis Terrarum in the Chronospace of Images

Michael Shapiro
Images of Planetary Danger.
Luciano Benetton's Ecumenical Fantasy 9

Jukka Kanerva
Oikoumenon and Benetton's Images 34

Ari Turunen
Centers and Peripheries.
The Construction of Ecumenical Space on World Maps 44

II The Rhetoric of Images

Kimmo Lehtonen
On the Relationship between Visuality and Rhetoric 69

Juha Virkki
Sociality in the Age of Mediascape.
The Uses of Media, Control of Distance, and Social Agency 84

III Private and Public in Religious Life-conduct

Marjo Kaartinen
Humanism Colliding with Humanism.
Public and Private Spheres in the English
Religious Debate on Monasticism from c. 1510 to 1540 111

Kari Palonen
How to Turn God into an Ally?
The Rhetoric of Life-conduct in
Max Weber's 'Protestant Ethic' 127

IV Image-Space of Political Action

Kia Lindroos
The Shopping Bag Lady and Politics.
Visualization and Temporalization of Politics
through Benjaminian Ideas 145

Tuija Parvikko
The Pariah as a Rebel.
From Identity Politics to the Politics of Rootlessness 164

Introduction

The desire to master the entire globe – or at least known parts of it – is as ancient as human civilization. Formerly, the pursuit often appeared as intentional and deliberate control over human action and life-conducts, mostly by concrete means. A manifestation of the desire to dominate has been the distinction between public and private spheres which has assumed both material and conceptual forms.

In the contemporary world, however, the physical boundaries between different spheres of life has become less distinct. This is due to new technology which tends to make distances and physical presence insignificant. The break-through of new technology is connected to the visualization of human interaction and communication. It is no longer governed by the written word: presently the fight for controlling human action and conduct is more often than not a fight for controlling image spaces of the human mind and understanding.

In other words, at present images and visual (re)presentations are conquering the human mind and understanding creating chronospaces of control and interaction. The public and private, centre and periphery, inside and outside are no longer simple physical spheres, but rather, image-spaces created in the electric spaces such as television and internet. However the concrete physical world has not disappeared. The question is, rather, how these different kinds of space and realities relate to each other and what kind of human world(s) is produced as a result of their interaction.

Until recently the desire to master the globe has been considered mainly in terms of structural oppression and textual analysis. Visual approaches have remained somewhat in the background or in the status of illustration. The seminar "Public and Private Spheres", organized by The Northern Photographic Centre and the Department of Political Science of the University of Jyväskylä in May 1994, in Oulu, was one of the first attempts in Finland to bring together the textual and visual ways of approaching such a theme. Simultaneously, it was an attempt to provide a meeting place and an arena for debate on the issue for scholars coming from different disciplines as well as for those coming from non-academic backgrounds.

This publication brings together most of the lectures and workshop-papers presented in Oulu. In addition, we have included contributions presented in a workshop on the same theme at the Department of Political Science in Jyväskylä arranged for those post-graduate students who were not able to participate in the Oulu-seminar.

The attempt to find new ways of tackling the desire to master and control is reflected in the various approaches adopted in the present articles. Politically significant phenomena of the present-day world cannot exclusively be restricted to obey and follow certain formerly adequate divisions such as power versus powerlessness, or public versus private, while these divisions cannot be rejected as totally inadequate either. However, political analysis urgently needs new insights and ways of approach informed by the process of visualization of human interaction.

The collection is divided into four sections to help the reader navigate through the changing image-spaces. The first section deals with an ancient human desire to master the entire globe. As a modern expression of this desire, Michael Shapiro takes up the case of Luciano Benetton introducing him as an ecumene of planetary danger. In Shapiro's understanding, Benetton's strategy to try to provoke consumers with his advertising campaigns springs from an ecumenical fantasy of a desire to overcome cultural differences and to master the entire globe. In his comment on Shapiro's article, Jukka Kanerva directs attention to the limits of Benetton's ecumenical possibilies. He points out that there was a shift in Benetton's

campaign strategy from the 1980's to 1990's. In the 1980's it acted as a global contributor to antiracism and multiculturalism with his United Colors campaign whereas it was only in the 1990's that he fully embraced ecumenalism by making use of social dangers. Kanerva suggests that Benetton is approaching the limits of his provocational strategy as the company is forced to beware of causing no real damage to its popularity among middle-class consumers. This is why he has to avoid playing with such themes as obesity and aging which touch too close to average middle-class consumers in Western countries.

Maps constitute a very concrete form of image-space. Usually we look at maps as if they were objective representations of the world even though no representation on flat paper can be a true copy of the world. Ari Turunen examines how centres and peripheries are represented in world-maps and argues that the dominance of the centre has also been metaphorically promoted on maps. In this way cartography has also contributed to the desire of mastering the globe and controlling from afar.

The second section deals with the relationship between visuality and rhetoric from two angles. Kimmo Lehtonen examines the rhetoric of photography arguing that the rhetorical validity of the photograph means getting its significance received at a certain cultural and historical moment in such a way that the photograph is located in a clear position in medium, genre and debate. Thus what is needed are methods to understand the aspects of a photograph as a sign system. Juha Virkki studies the uses of media, control of distance, and social agency in the age of mediascape. He argues that in the postmodern condition the social role of media has changed from representative to constitutive; instead of questioning what media is we ought to try to answer the question of what media does. Attention should be directed to the uses of media at the everyday level and people's everyday experiences as they may offer a possibility for critique of the universal by the particular.

In Weberian terms the problem of life-conduct appears as a special version of micro-politics concerning one's chances in the life-conduct. Section III shifts attention to configurations of public and private in religious life-conducts. Marjo Kaartinen examines

public and private aspects of monasticism in the Reformation period England. She shows that withdrawing into a monastery did not mean leaving active public life behind. On the contrary the public and active aspects of life were strongly present in the religious houses and humanists were eager to reject the idea of privatization of the self.

Kari Palonen reads Max Weber's *Die protestantische Ethik* as a study on micro-politics of the radical Protestant's life-conduct. In the post-Reformation context an extreme submission before God was turned into a doctrine of self-affirmation in worldly affairs. This was done in rhetorical terms by systematically adapting one's self-conduct to the signs of God's forensic rhetoric. This methodological ability gives human beings a chance to turn the existential question of salvation into a hermeneutic one, which leaves room for human effort.

Section IV searches for spaces for political action in a world where clear boundaries between the public political sphere and the private natural sphere have blurred away. Starting from Walter Benjamin's notion that there has been a Copernican change from historical to political categories of thinking Kia Lindroos argues that a linear understanding of time has been replaced by a multidimensional time concept in which the dialectics of past and future are always mediated by the present breaking the continuity of experience. In Benjaminian terms the image-space of political action should be understood as a bodily space. In the present-day world the constitution of this bodily space does not follow the boundaries of public and private, but rather the subjective temporal experience is conceptualized in terms of moments constructed through each present.

Searching for possibities of political action in the modern world Tuija Parvikko draws from Hannah Arendt's conception of pariahdom. She argues that Arendt's conception of political action does not apply only to fully authorized political actors of the public realm but it should be linked with her understanding of the pariah's situation. In the modern world, pariahdom ought to be understood as a situational outsider position which directs attention to marginality and rootlessness as conditions of contemporary politics.

* * *

Organizing the seminars and publishing this collection would not have been possible without financial and other support. We want to thank The Northern Photographic Centre and especially its manager Pirkko Siitari, The Oulu Art Museum, The Faculty of Social Sciences and The Department of Political Science of The University of Jyväskylä as well as The Academy of Finland for their contributions.

Jyväskylä, March 1996

Tuija Parvikko *Jukka Kanerva*

I The Conquest of the Orbis Terrarum in the Chronospace of Images

Michael Shapiro

Images of Planetary Danger*

Luciano Benetton's Ecumenical Fantasy

Introduction: Ecumenical Drives and Resistant Geographies

In recent years the Benetton company, centered in Treviso Italy, has manifested a dual universalizing impulse. In addition to having achieved the status of a global apparel manufacturer, "with 7000 licensed retail stores in over 100 countries on six continents,"[1] its advertising campaigns have begun featuring social and political issues, in order, says Luciano Benetton, to give "people the news," and "inform them about universal themes" (Lynch 1993, 23). However one treats the sincerity of Benetton's social concern, the advertising campaign as well as the production and retailing structures have altered global space. At the levels of practice and representation, Luciano Benetton, whose on-going autobiography is imbricated with the company's global ambitions, is one of modernity's leading ecumenes.

The ecumenical impulse – the desire to efface boundaries, overcome difference, and master in some fashion the entire globe – is poorly understood by a modernity absorbed into a frame of geopolitical jurisdictions. The European system of states, though

* Previously published in Alternatives, vol 19, no 4 Fall 1994, pp. 433-454.

currently under immense pressures from ethno-nationalist mobilizations, remains the dominant model for thinking global space. Therefore, in order to understand attempts, such as Benetton's, at overcoming boundaries and mastering the globe, we must distance ourselves from the European model. Ancient Rome is one distancing historical venue that becomes available when we heed the modern European model's approach to security, which is a politics of balance and equilibrium.

As Paul Veyne has noted, historical Roman excursions are productive because "Roman history...takes us out of ourselves and forces us to make explicit the differences separating us from it" (Veyne 1982, 176). More specifically, Veyne glosses the difference with respect to security problematics:

> "Rome incarnates an archaic form, not of imperialism but of isolationism. She denies the pluralities of nations: she behaves, as Momsen said, as if she were the sole state in the full meaning of the word. She does not seek a semi-security from day to day in equilibrium with other cities, but wants to live in tranquility and to obtain for herself once and for all a whole and definitive security." (Veyne 1982, 176)

Caesar Augustus, another ecumene from the Italian Peninsula, was deeply implicated in the production of this Roman "isolationism". Indeed, it was Augustus who articulated an ecumenical conception of the Roman Empire.[2] Throughout his autobiographical *Res Gestiae*, Augustus constructs Romans as "masters of the *oikoumene*" (Nicolet 1991, 31). His personal dream, moreover, is represented in terms of global mastery, the conquest of the *orbis terrarum* (Nicolet 1991, 29). As an ecumenically-oriented cartographer, Augustus, like Luciano Benetton, manifested his universalizing impulse at the levels of both action and representation. He pursued his global quest not only with the material bodies and tools of conquest – Roman legions with their weapons, plus the agricultural and transportational technologies behind them – but also through allegorical repesentations: striking coins with global images and placing statues in public squares with globalizing themes (e.g. one of Caesar with his foot on a globe). In short, the ecumenical impulse driving Augustus's

armies was first of all inscribed on coins and in the overall architecture of the Roman Forum.

Ultimately, the primary barriers to the realization of Augustus's dream of global domination were the material geographies and armed defenses of the peoples resisting incorporation within his *oikoumene*. And whatever the effect of his ecumenical representations on mobilizing the Roman armies, it was primarily an incentive system that summoned the bodies that were complicit with the desire for conquest. The status structure within the Roman aristocracy recruited commanders, and financial and agricultural grants recruited troops.[3]

Roman agriculture, weapons technology and logistics were sufficient to produce the ancient world's most effective fighting force, but its technology did not dematerialize physical barriers (as has been the case with the aircraft and intercontinental missiles of the twentieth century). Roman global domination was therefore only partially successful. It succeeded only to the degree that it could mobilize force and send it through resistant spaces and bodies.

In contrast, the subsequent Christian ecumenicalism confronted a moral rather than a physical geography. Ideas could be moved more easily than vast military apparatuses. In this case, the barriers to mastering the globe were the variety of spiritual or ideational commitments of the different peoples that Christian missionaries sought to convert. Ultimately, the Christian imaginary, while still active, has been historically subordinated to the secular imaginary dominated by a geopolitical, state-oriented cartography. From the seventeenth century onward, as reasons of state displaced what remained of the power of spiritual proprieties, codes based on personal commitments and/or group affiliations paled in comparison to the proliferating norms of the order of states and their interrelationships.

The consolidation of the nation-state system was to frustrate not only Christian ecumenes seeking to universalize space rather than allow strictly bounded jurisdictions but also the spatial practices of affiliational groups within states. "The state," in the language of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari is a "wall" that has bricked in and immobilized affiliational commitments. Or, in their more legalistic

metaphor, it has overcoded other interpersonal systems of reciprocity. Moreover, it has attempted to code and thus inhibit flows across its jurisdictions (Deleuze and Guattari 1977, 194).

But while state sovereignty or citizenship codes in the modern period have generally dominated those associated with religious ecumenicalism, and although state jurisdictions are under pressure from ethno-nationalisms, it has been from industrial and commercial forces that the state-system version of space has been significantly challenged. In the modern period, staunch defenders of state nationalism such as Margaret Thatcher have sought to resist not only sovereignty-attenuating trade regulations but also the representational practices with which they are associated. Privileging even symbolic sovereignties over expanded systems of exchange, she fought against the idea of a European currency that would replace the paper representing British sterling.

British money for her was less a medium of exchange than a symbol of national autonomy.[4] As is well known, however, ever since industrialization and capital growth overcame mercantilist inhibitions, political authorities have been more often complicit than resistant to commercially motivated global expansion. And more significantly for the conceptual purposes at hand, it has been entrepreneurs rather than political leaders whose activities have attenuated the inhibitions of cultural practices and flowed across geopolitical boundaries. In short, it has been capitalists that have pushed modernization, where "modernization is a process by which capitalism uproots and makes mobile that which is grounded, clears away that which impedes circulation, and makes exchangeable what is singular" (Crary 1990, 10).

Moreover, it has been not only the forces of sovereignty but also cultural practices and affiliations that have created the inertia that capitalist enterprise has pushed against. As Fernand Braudel has noted, culture, particularly in terms of its relationship with economy, is best understood as a form of inertia (Braudel 1977, 6). As a result those entrepreneurs with ecumenical or at least significant expansionary ambitions have had to defeat or annex traditional cultural representations and practices.

Entrepreneurs of Production Versus Representation

The global reach ultimately achieved by the Rockefeller family enterprises resulted from a combination of personal drive and structural imperatives. The drive to control oil production was very much a part of the first Rockefeller, John D.'s, personal profile. However thereafter, although Rockefeller precepts about the exercise of power are involved, much of the expansion was a function of the logic of production and marketing. To produce a lot of oil and move it across states borders, while at the same time disabling would-be competitors, it becomes neccessary to set up manufacturing organizations in more than one state (hence the trusts) and to control interstate transportation (hence the Rockefeller domination of railroads and inland water transportation). Finally, when controlling foreign oil reserves becomes implicated in the economies of dominating oil production and sales, it is not surprising to see Rockefellers visiting the White House, contributing to the development of the Council on Foreign Relations, and in general seeking to exploit the significance of oil to a U.S. government concerned with global security management.

The Rockefeller's geographic odyssey was based more on power than symbolization. Because John D. Rockefeller's oil business was production rather than consumption-oriented, he could rely on a consumer demand resulting from road building and the increasing automobile population rather than having to annex meanings related to desire, as in the fashion industry. But Rockefeller's success was a less a matter of his acumen in production than of his vigorous attacks on spatial and organizational barriers to his expansion and control. As it has been astutely put, Rockefeller's "contributions had far less to do with the technology of oil than with the technology of power" (Collier and Horowitz 1976, 35). For example, when his expansion was stymied by the illegality of operating manufacturing facilities outside of his home state, he enlisted the legal advice that resulted in the development of trust agreements. These trusts, constructed by his attorney, Samuel C.T. Dodd, were the legal

instruments by which Rockefeller went on to integrate the national market (Collier and Horowitz 1976, 35-6).

The same legal maneuvering Rockefeller employed to overcome spatial barriers to his own expansion was deployed to inhibit the movement through space of his competitors. For example, he bought up rights to various pieces of property to prevent his competitor, Tidewater Oil, from building a 110 mile pipeline from their oil fields to the sea. In general, the legal acumen that Rockefeller's wealth made available to him was devoted more toward such spatial practices than production – clearing barriers to his own expansion and creating them for his competitors.

While Rockefeller was often an object of policy making during the period of his greatest national expansion and consolidation of the national oil market, his later philanthropic activities, through which he managed to blunt the effects of his moral critics, helped the Rockefeller dynasty to become makers of policy. Already, by 1883 Rockefeller was the sole exporter of oil, and by the 1890's "American oil was seeping into unexplored reaches of the globe" (Collier and Horowitz 1976, 41).

In becoming a successful, predatory capitalist, Rockefeller became the target of traditional Christian moralists, e.g. a Denver paper carried the headline, "Every prayer Rockefeller utters is an insult to the Christ that died for suffering humanity" (Collier and Horowitz 1976, 116). Ironically, the philanthropic activity Rockefeller undertook, in part to silence his moralistic critics, ultimately helped the Rockefellers to consolidate their grip on global oil markets; it was the Rockefeller charitable trust that helped fund the Council on Foreign Relations through which the Rockefellers have recruited and trained the foreign policy advisors and officials who have protected their global interests.

The progression of force through space that characterizes the Rockefeller story is a fairly straightforward, linear narrative. The steps go from (1) the manufacture of petroleum products, to (2) the control of their domestic movement by controlling transportation, to (3) the control over legal appartuses in order to remove the barriers to domestic expansion, to (4) the control over national policy to allow for the global consolidation of oil markets.

This Rockefeller story is a tale of expanding control, enabled by the Rockefeller-Dodd collaboration, which translated Rockefeller desires for expansion into the legal mechanisms necessary for its realization. When we do a fast-forward to the present and consider the globalization of the Benetton family enterprise, the functional equivalent to the Rockefeller-Dodd relationship is that between Luciano Benetton and Oliviero Toscani, the creator of Benetton's advertising campaigns since the mid 1980's.

Benetton's global reach is accomplished not only through its growing network of franchises but also through its advertising images. While Rockefeller's geographic expansion required a reconfiguring of the legalities of land use to move his enterprise across state and national boundaries, Benetton's success is more a function of its representational than political technologies. Oliviero Toscani has had a free hand in running the advertising campaign, which in phase one focused on cultural difference and phase two on global dangers and catastrophies. Both approaches have enhanced Benetton's global recognition and turned its products into virtually universal objects of desire.

To appreciate this new form of ecumenical power, and the technology on which it relies, photography, it is necessary to understand the way in which the socially embedded technologies of vision create the conditions of possibility for this power. Therefore before considering in detail some of the specifics of Benetton's advertising photographs, we must consider the twentieth century's constructions of ways of seeing and their relationship to desiring consumption.

Desire and Display

What must be understood to appreciate the representationally oriented ecumenes of the twentieth century are two parallel developments that began in the nineteenth. They are what Walter Benjamin theorized so well: the co-occurence of the new urban spaces produced by capitalism and a new kind of observer. Benjamin noted that modern capitalism had produced a spatial anarchy

in which traditional separations of locations such as the public and the private had broken down: "just as the living room reappears on the street... the street migrates into the living room", and temporal practices for sleeping and eating had lost their consistency: "there is no hour, often no place for sleeping and eating" (Benjamin 1978, 171). At the same time, a new kind of observer had been created. This observer is:

> "An ambulatory observer shaped by a convergence of new urban spaces, technologies, and new economic and symbolic functions of images and products – forms of artificial lighting, new use of mirrors, glass and steel architecture, railroads, museums, gardens, photography, fashions, crowds." (Crary 1990, 20)

The epistemology of vision into the nineteenth century was based on a sensational model of apprehension. As Crary points out, the *camera obscura*, a light recording device, exemplified a model of vision in which the observer is a fixed entity into which the truth of the material world penetrates. With photography, film, television and other modern technologies of vision, there is a sundering of sensation from image production. Observers are attracted into ways of seeing, and they are constructed as observing subjects. Photography itself does not effect the change: "what changes are the plural forces and rules composing the field in which perception occurs" (Crary 1990, 6).

Neither photography nor other technologies create this observer, a person with a way of seeing based on a mobile identity. They entered a new epistemological space that was already taking shape in the nineteenth century when the dynamics of consumption and circulation in the new commercial spaces had already invalidated the old epistemologies in which observers were static. With social mobility, not only models of seeing but also various signifying practices changed. For example, whereas throughout the middle ages clothing was emblematic of a person's fixed place in society and in the cosmos as a whole, the coming of modernity and fashion presumed a possibility of changing statuses in the social order. The mobile consumer is also a choosing buyer as well as an ambulatory observer. In Baudrillard's terms, these consumers consume codes

as well as things, and in the process construct their identities within an assumption of choice.[5]

In this context, there is a significant biography situated between the Rockefeller and Benetton stories. It is that of John Wannamaker, founder of the large Philadelphia department store that still bears his name. This biography, has been recently constructed as part of William Leach's narration of desiring consumption in "America", the "land of desire". Wannamaker, arguably the most influential merchant of the twentieth century, exploited the new spaces and technologies of consumption as well as the new technology of the observer. To do so, he had to overcome cultural inertia. As Leach discovered from Wannamaker's autobiographical writings, Wannamaker specifically saw himself in a struggle against traditional anti-commercial culture. As people moved from the country to the city, the home changed from a place of work to a place to hoard goods (Leach 1993, 8), and Wannamaker, recognizing this trend, struggled to overcome religious crotchets about thrift and republican attitudes about economizing.

Most significant for present purposes are the allies that Wannamaker enlisted. In addition to breaking down the traditional economizing ideology about saving, through his introduction of layaway plans and consumer credit, Wannamaker incorporated a visual aesthetics into the layout of his store, based on the primary building blocks: color, glass, and light (Leach 1993, 9).

Unlike Rockefeller's oil, a commodity with only use value, Wannamaker's products were objects of desire. Apparently he, like modern economists, understood the reversal that social mobility and technologies of representation had combined to produce: "it was not that useful things were desired but that desired things were useful."[6] In order to provoke desiring consumption, Wannamaker had to produce images that helped to efface or at least appropriate formerly resistant aspects of culture. Therefore the fashions he sold often used folk designs and images that had once had affiliational rather than fashion significance. He also annexed historical imagery, e.g. recreating themes from the French Revolution in his interior displays.

Essential to this part of the Wannamaker story is the window

display. Through the nineteenth century traditional Christian and Republican American culture abjured such attempts at attracting consumption. Wannamaker's building blocks – color, glass, and light – provided the technological and material base. The inventive practice sprung from an alliance between the entrepreneur and the window designer.

The alliance between Rockefeller and the legal expert, Dodd, which made possible Rockefeller's territorial expansion, is analogous to an alliance between Wannamaker (and the other department store pioneers such as Marshall Field, Henry Siegel and Percy and Jesse Straus) and experts in window display such as Frank Baum. Wannamaker's territorial expansion was symbolic. With his allies in display he deterritorialized the control over symbolic space by religious codes that proscribed cupidity in social space. Indeed Baum argued for the use of best art to "arouse in the observer the cupidity and longing to possess the goods" (Leach 1993, 60).

In addition to this kind of territorial expansion, Wannamaker's images were also made available to remote consumers through the use of advertising brochures. To allow for this circulation of his images, Wannamaker, like other merchants, created the pressures responsible for the dramatic expansion of the U.S. postal service. While it was railroads and barges in the case of a commodity like Rockefeller's oil that allowed for territorial dispersal, in the case of a representational dispersal, it was the mail service.

Complicit with Wannamaker's representational command over the space of desire was the development of the modeling agency (e.g. the John Powers agency, established in 1923). Leach summarizes the effect introduced by the female fashion model:

> "With the help of the new field of fashion photography, Powers created a standardized conception of female beauty that may have greatly exceeded in psychological tyranny over women, the still one-dimensional standards of the nineteenth century fashion drawing." (Leach 1993, 309)

The fashion photograph pushed further in the direction of liberating desire by deterritorializing theological models of space and subjectivity. Whereas theological images constructed people as fixed

archetypes, the fashion photo, e.g. "the dances of the 'girls' in advertising images, and the gait of fashion models," produces an unconstrained "whateverness" (Agamben 1993, 48). The fashion photo is therefore a propitious instrument for issuing a summons to persons living in an age in which individuals can play a role in constructing and representing alternative and changing identities. Because, as noted above, photography is the primary technology Luciano Benetton has enlisted in his drive to occupy global space, it is appropriate to move from Wannamaker, whose primary strategy was the display, to Benetton, whose photographic images are paramount.

Luciano Benetton and the Annexation of Global Dangers

Biographemes abound in the Benetton story, for Luciano Benetton has thrust his life and body into the center of his representational strategies. At the same time that the Toscani advertising photographs have been creating controversies around the world, Luciano Benetton has adopted a markedly public *persona*. He changed from a private to a public body, running successfully for the Roman Senate, and from a covered to a revealed body; his already very public body, with the message "Empty your Closets" written across it, appeared nude in newspapers around the globe to advertise Benetton's charitable clothes-collecting campaign (Waxman 1993, B-1).

This publicity-seeking move makes historical sense. Commercially oriented ecumenes are always subject to moral obloquy. Like John D. Rockefeller, whose drive toward a global reach for his commercial enterprise was supplemented with a universalizing philanthropic practice, Benetton works to shape his personal identity into a globally recognized moral identity. In addition to the high visibility of his self-representation – one reporter asked if his nakedness meant he has a soul – Benetton's biographical interests emerge also in the sketches provided by the Benetton enterprises' public relations branch. Their literature now includes biographical vignettes on both Luciano Benetton and Oliviero Toscani.

Ever since Toscani, primarily a photo-journalist by training, developed an advertising campaign that links Benetton's image with global symbolism, both Benetton and Toscani have become newsworthy subjects. Their photographic portraits, life stories, and thoughts have effectively become part of the promotion of Benetton's products. Whatever the rationale for the recent advertising, which focuses not on fashion but on social and political issues and dangers, Toscani claims simply to be thinking through his work with *carte blanche* from Benetton to think in any way he wants (Toscani 1991, 22).

The result has been effective publicity for Benetton. Most significantly, however, the Benetton image-advertising is part of a globalizing, ecumenical impulse. Ever since Toscani produced the slogan, "The United Colors of Benetton," the Benetton company has made explicit its desire to dominate the "mediascape"[7] with a symbolism that comprehends nationalities, ethnicities, religions, and even tribal affiliations. The world of geopolitical boundaries that Benetton's enterprises transverse is no impediment to the production of media-carried, global symbolism. Indeed, Toscani "constructs, or invokes a boundary in order to convey a message of its transcendence" (Back and Quaade 1993, 66).

Benetton, like his earlier ecumenical compatriot, Caesar Augustus, is thus also what Paul Veyne has called (ironically) an "isolationist." Wary of all boundaries, he tries, as he has put it, to "see the world as a whole" (Lynch 1993, 23), and in so doing, to overcome national and cultural barriers to his global expansion. As his enterprise grew, Benetton, like John D. Rockefeller, tried personally to affect national-level politics. But after two years as a Senator in Rome, he decided that his national political role was too confining. Choosing not to run for his seat again, his political identity is now wholly global as his media campaign has taken on a social and political content. In the current advertisements, no fashions are shown; the "United Colors of Benetton" slogan (in small type) is the only company symbol on pictures ranging from war cemeteries to dead bodies in Bosnia, and from black and white wrists, handcuffed together to naked body bearing an HIV-positive tatoo.

In situating his politics squarely within the global mediascape,

Benetton has become part of a struggle over the shape of global spaces and the meanings of the human identities within them. Recognizing that cultural cartographies are waxing as geopolitical ones wane, his attack is directed at effacing inhibitory cultural difference rather than against the inhibitions of national boundaries (as was the case with Rockefellers global push).

As was noted above, John Wannamaker recognized that the production of American consumer desire required him to contest domestic cultural forces, which prescribed economizing and proscribed cupidity. In that contest against traditional domestic culture, he helped turn urban space into display space, with the aid of experts in decorative arts (who, as noted, made use of the technological and material forms of color, glass, and light). Luciano Benetton's struggle against globally distributed cultural affiliations and inhibitions, enlists photographic technology.

Taking traditional racial, ethnic, and national sources of difference and antagonism, Benetton's United Colors campaign, which through the 1980's represented a quiescent and amiable multiculturalism, produced an ecumenicalism of the image. He turned cleavage into a consensus in which his fashions were a metaphor for a global cultural detente. Whereas earlier, difference-effacing and moderating cultural confrontations came from traveling merchants, pilgrims, missionaries and conquerors – what Arjun Appadurai has called "long-distance cultural traffic" (Appadurai 1990, 1) – it has been media dissemination that has been the vehicle for Benetton's ecumenicalism. The rapid electronic dissemination of images and slogans has changed the shape of the cultural battlefield.

Benetton is certainly not the first to do battle against global cultural difference in this way. The Coca Cola company has, like Braudel, theorized culture as a form of inertia. Accordingly, it has pitched its advertising in a way that finesses what it cannot change. More specifically, of late it is traditional Islamic proscriptions against displaying partially clothed bodies that has posed problems for a centralized photo and film image campaign for Coca Cola. Marcio M. Moreira, the architect of Coke's plan to "centrally develop advertising aimed at international markets" (O'Barr 1989, 4) has

found his most difficult challenge in "dealing with Moslem regulations" (O'Barr 1989, 9).

Benetton's approach has been more aggressive. As another large-scale commercial ecumene, fighting the pull of "cultural gravity,"[8] Benetton's "United Colors" campaign at an obvious level creates an analogy between its multicolored fashions and the multicolored global constituency whose desires must be coordinated with Benetton's codes and images. At another level, the United Colors imagery evokes an allegory of political consensus. Just as the U.N. is a place for replacing political and military confrontation with negotiated agreements, Benetton unites different cultures who can agree on fashion. At this stage of its advertising, Benetton occupies the position of the globe's most universal institution, the U.N. These ads say that formerly antagonistic peoples can embrace each other as well as the same fashions. In Figure 1, one of the Benetton campaign's transitional images, only the company name is left to represent Benetton's fashions and difference-effacing effect, and the emphasis is on the multicultural embrace.

Fig. 1

However to understand the way the photograph can do its work, we cannot assume a passive observer. As Roland Barthes pointed out, photographic meaning results not only from the codes the image

deploys but also from "the stock of signs" belonging to the observer.[9] Just as the summoning effects of the store window presumed the ambulatory observer, created throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the photographic image, disseminated through global media, also presumes a historically produced observer. Modernity's observers are symbolically mobile in two important senses.

First, the emigration waves in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have produced a significant portion of a global population who have emotional and ontological ties to more than one geographic location; they feel the pull of territorial extention. Benetton's multicultural and spatial images must therefore grab the attention of modernity's diasporic populations because of the powerful disjunctures they experience. As it was well stated by the "editors" in a recent treatment on the media-diaspora relationship:

> "Complex transnational flows of media images and messages perhaps create the greatest disjunctures for diasporic populations, since in the electronic media in particular, the politics of desire and imagination are always in contest with the politics of heritage and nostalgia." (iii)

The ecumenical thrust of Benetton's message – the idea of reconciling difference – must have a particularly powerful effect on those diasporic populations, who have to "piece together housing and language, electricity and ethnicity, clothing styles and state entitlements..." (Ibid.) in order to create an uneasy coherence.

Secondly, modernity's populations are highly mobile in a symbolic sense, through their media consumption. Geographic space has been largely effaced by what Paul Virilio calls "chronospace," the speed of linkage between various nodalities. Exotic places and persons are always present, though mediated through a jumble of political, cultural, and commercial codes, for a global culture that rapidly exchanges images, information, and styles. Modernity's observers thus possess a stock of global signs that not only extend and complicate their territorial identities but also are constantly enhanced and replenished such that they can locate some aspects of themselves in the rapid commercial recycling of places, peoples and events.

It is this symbolic, media-oriented mobility of the observer that must be appreciated to treat the significance of the current stage of Benetton's advertising campaign, the representation of global dangers and catastrophies. Don DeLillo, whose novel *White Noise* mapped the contemporary mediascape and its observer/auditors, recognized some time ago that dangers and social threats are more consumer commodities than edifying life experiences. Separated from the contexts that make them palpable lessons about the fragility of life and the intimacy of death in life, they compete with other media-carried diversions for the attention of restless shoppers:

> "One of advertising's unspoken rules is to absorb social disruptions and dangers into the molded jell of mass-production. This is the philosophy of total consumerism...We consume social threats and problems as if they were breakfast food."[10]

A culture that consumes danger codes can be contrasted dramatically with one that must make alertness to danger part of the intimacy of one's life experiences. Barry Lopez was doubtless alluding to this in his report of the answer of an Eskimo Shaman to an anthropologist's query about his people's beliefs. "We do not believe, we fear," he said (Lopez 1986, 201). The epistemology of fear rather than belief can only belong to a culture in which everyone is in some way in charge of dealing with their own dangers.

The modern consumer of codes cannot focus fear and dread. The options are changing channels or in other ways softening the effects by allowing attention to wander. The media softening of which DeLillo spoke is complemented by the conduct of the modern, restless and unfocused observer. Eskimos, as Lopez notes, have more day to day fear, and their way of dealing with it is a close reading of their immediate environment (Lopez 1986, 201). Modernity's dangers are heavily mediated. Those who read them sort representations rather than read their immediate experiences.

A case in point is the recent genealogy of the weather forecast provided by Andrew Ross. Whereas once weather news was a form of "folklore," based, on an "everyday cult of experience," the modern weather report is danger-oriented and aimed at one of modernity's commodity-oriented concerns: "the almost complete commod-

ification of bodily maintenance in the face of year-round weather threats and assaults" (Ross 1987/88, 120).

It is in this context that Benetton's social danger advertising operates. It is parasitic on various globally witnessed events and catastrophies, and it connects itself to global preoccupations. By appropriating widely disseminated news, Benetton occupies proven sources of global attention. In addition, because global dangers are also often represented in government warnings, Benetton associates itself with concerns that receive positive official sanction. And, in representing global dangers in an often gruesome and shocking way, Benetton has managed to get some of its ads banned from various publications (e.g. *The New Yorker*), to draw official ire (e.g. the French Minister of Culture), and more generally, to receive substantial publicity from the controversies (interviews for Benetton and Toscani and frequent coverage of the images themselves). In short, with the use of the photograph, Benetton has blanketed the global mediascape. But apart from the various structures of attention from which they have benefitted, an understanding of their provocations can only come from a more specific reading of individual images.

This reading begins with a consideration of a war thematic Benneton has annexed to the global catastrophy phase of its advertising campaign (Figure 2, see following page). In addition to the Benetton apparel referenced by the "United Colors" logo, the referents of the photo are intelligible only to the extent that the observer is able to supply a narrative that exceeds what is available within the frame.

Two different kinds of textual practices provide guidance on the effects of this photographic minimalism. The first is a more hermeneutically oriented approach, which locates the absence of detail within the problem of genre. Erich Auerbach exemplifies this approach, in his comparative analysis of the difference in textual practices in Homer's telling of the discovery of Odysseus's scar and the *Old Testament* narrative of Abraham and Isaac. Arguing that Homer can be analyzed but not interpreted because his poems "conceal nothing," Auerbach (1953, 13) points to the richness of the detail in the episode of Euryclea's disovery of Odysseus' scar

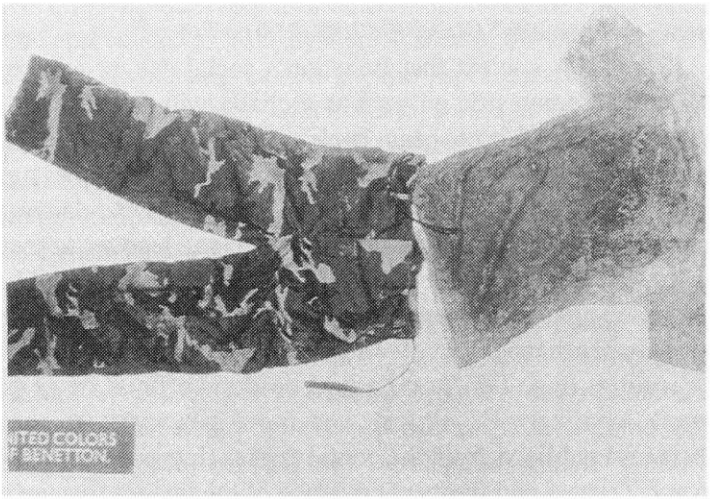


Fig. 2

in *The Odyssey* and argues that everything in Homer is in the foreground. There is nothing outside of the frame of the story that must be retrieved. This is because the Homeric poem is designed to provide entertainment, to excite the immediate senses, not provoke an interpretive contemplation that would result in commitment or affiliation.

In sharp contrast is the story of Abraham and Isaac. When read next to the story of Odysseus scar, the remarkable absence of detail becomes apparent. The reader is told that on the day Isaac is to be sacrificed, they leave "early in the morning," but there is no description of the route they take (Auerbach 1953, 10). Auerbach asserts that this absence of detail is owed to the genre of the text. Unlike Homeric poems, the *Old Testament* is meant to be interpreted. "Early in the morning," for example, has ethical rather than temporal significance; Abraham begins early because he is so obedient to Jehova's command. Moreover, the God of the *Old Testament* "extends into the depths,"(Auerbach 1953, 12) his meaning is to be summoned by an interpretive practice. The text is meant not to entertain but to absorb the reader into a covenant. The interpreter is supposed to do interpretive work on the text in order to be located within a community of belief.

Similarly, the absence of narrative detail in Benetton's minimalist photo images provokes an interpretive response. In this case, the interpretive work locates the observer in a global community, trying to make sense of the violent clashes of ethno-nationalists. This global self-identification is precisely the difference-effacing stance that Benetton has been trying to achieve. The interpretive contemplation of global dangers and catastrophies cuts across ethnicities, nationalities and tribalisms, allowing Benetton to position its products in a universalizing thematic that transcends cultural inhibitions. It is an effective response to the marketing problem that Benetton's ecumenical commercial impulse poses: "How to devise a coherent global advertising campaign in countries with different cultures, different climates, and different demands" (Waxman 1993, B-1).

The hermeneutic reading, when sensitive to genre, alerts us to interpretation-summoning effect of the war photo Benetton has appropriated. However, to treat more precisely the images' signifying effects, and especially the way those effects exert pressure to situate observers, we need a semiotic reading. This kind of reading will also emphasize the way the image contains bits of a narrative without supplying the diegesis as a whole. But in addition to the observation that the partialness and abstraction of these pictures provoke contemplation and interpretion, we need to locate more specifically where the observer becomes situated and what specific interpretive tensions are evoked.

In Figure 2, various elements of a war story are present; the bloody shirt and camouflage pants belonged to a man, and something about the size, shape, and arrangement makes them seem to simulate the comportment of the body to which they belonged; the man was probably young. The camouflage provides a military coding, and although military clothes often migrate out of their martial context into a civilian world of fashion, the blood on the shirt and pants helps fix them as an unambiguous military sign. Finally, the blood serves as an independent sign; it turns the young soldier into a casualty. And because the shirt is not a military tee shirt, it constructs its dead or wounded wearer as part of a militia rather than a professional, well-trained army.

Thus the elements of the war story are present, but what is within the frame is insufficient to provide a definitive narrative. As a consumer of global events and situations provided by various media, the observer is able to recognize the collection of signs as part of a larger story: the sectarian violence in Bosnia, but the particularities of this picture simply open a space for the viewer to contemplate a variety of smaller stories within this larger one. In Norman Bryson's terms (which he has applied to non-narrative paintings), the "sidestepping of a story" – in this case, supplying only the elements: man, youth, soldier, non-professional, casuality – has the effect of "widening [the] contemplative interval" (Bryson 1988, 93).

As for locating the observer, both the comportment of the clothes – lines running from the pant legs outward, from the pants across the gap to the shirt, and from the neck hole outward – effectively make the force of the picture centrifugal, driving the viewer toward the edges of the picture in search of missing clues, which can only be supplied through imaginative labor. The activity provoked must supply a story that exceeds what is available to the gaze.[11] The contemplative labor might produce stories about the grief of a family who lost a young son, of a nation making sacrifices to survive, of the folly of turning national loyalty into reckless violence for untrained young men, and so on. At a minimum, the larger story, that of the war in Bosnia, already has a small part of the viewer's attention; the picture itself transforms episodic attention into the kind strenuous interpretive work that non-narrative images can set in motion.

In Figure 3 (see following page), we observe another non-narrative photographic image, but this one is much more provocative, particularly in the way it inscribes its observer. The most significant contrast between this "HIV-Positive," partial body and the bloody militia uniform is that although the viewer is driven to the margins of the frame of the war photo, in search of various alternative narratives, the story remains geopolitically static. The clash, for most viewers, is somewhere else, taking place between partisans with remote affiliation; it is viewed, in most cases, from a great geographical and emotional distance.

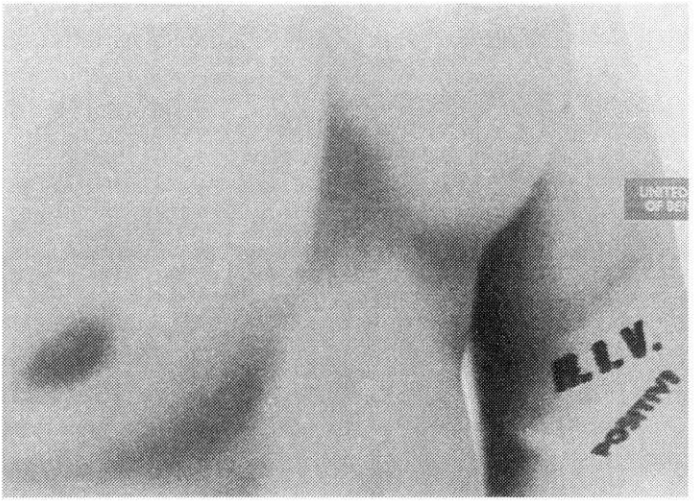


Fig. 3

The HIV-positive body is part of a general narrative of the movement of bodies through space, and given the global spread of AIDS, it is potentially everywhere. The photographic image therefore sets up a relay between the space of the image and the living space of the observer. It is a migrating story and a story of migration, given the symbolic relays between the body in the image and the body of the observer as well as the issue of the travel of HIV-positive people across boundaries. The image's extreme abstraction drives the viewer not simply to the margins of the image but all the way home.

In addition to having more personal relevance for each viewer than the war photo, the space of contemplation opened by the HIV-positive body is more fraught with tensions. At a global level, the meaning of AIDS is contested by what Cindy Patton has noted as the "disjunct features of epidemiological and tropical medicine discourse" (Patton 1993, 4-5). Within these different discourses there are different terms for those at risk, and they summon different identity spaces, not only for the disease but also for sexualities. At a minimum, there is tremendous contention about the diasporic origins and continuing spread of AIDS.

Moreover the competing epidemiological and tropical medicine stories about AIDS – one epidemic and one endemic-oriented –

evoke different frames for antagonisms toward various groups. The image therefore simultaneously engages conflictual narratives about the sources of the threat and global and domestic antagonisms with considerable temporal extention. Blaming with respect to the threat from the disease is connected to more venerable historical grievances and cultural and social partisanships. Of course, the tattoo also summons a comparison between AIDS and Holocaust victims, and the latter remain objects of global interpretive contention.

Finally the relatively ambiguous sexuality of the HIV person in the photo – the subject seems to be a white male, but nothing helps distinquish a sexual orientation – must produce additional interpretive work. Because one's sexuality in general as well as in relation to the threat of AIDS has deep resonances and daily relevance, the image enters spaces of both fundamental and on-going self-construction. It introduces conflictual stories that must collide with in-progress life stories.

At the same time the narratives involve dangers which connect up with the "low level fear"[12] pervading cultures that must evaluate dangers on the basis of conflicting codes and narrative carried by various media. It is, as was suggested above, modernity's kind of fear, peculiar to "the mediatized human victim we all are in different ways" (Patton 1993, 24). In most cases, the work of the image on viewers and of viewers on the image is therefore likely to be extremely strenuous.

Conclusion: Benetton's Global Chronospace

The dual universalizing, ascribed to Benetton at the outset of this analysis, involves a global logistics based more on time than space. As one analyst has put it, Benetton competes "in the fourth dimension – time" (Istvan 1988). Benetton uses a "consumer-draw system." With rapid electronic feedback from their various outlets, they determine which of their products are moving best in which markets. They use such techniques as holding a lot of undyed wools so they can color them, depending on what is more in demand. As a result of their rapid information retrieval, flexible manufacturing, and centralized designing, they can restock their outlets in two to three

weeks. This logistical structure can be compared to the more traditional, inflexible way that apparel producers used to design for the season and then have to wait for the next year if they made bad choices.

Benetton's logistics therefore dissolves geographic space for purposes of making available goods fitted to consumer values. Their speed changes what used to be an impossible geographic extention into an information network based on rapid transmission.

Benetton's global space of representation is also based on speed. Social dangers and catastrophes are rapidly reprocessed as advertising images. Benetton has effectively added a multiplier to one of modernity's dynamics that Walter Benjamin most lamented, the aestheticization of the political. With its centralized advertising campaign, making use of images that have just had global coverage, Benetton's representational logistics, like its manufacturing logistics, turns geographic space into chronospace, and given the strategies of provoking interpretation, hooking into contemporary structures of controversy and fear and, more generally, taking advantage of modernity's historically constructed observer, its command of the *oikoumene* makes use of a shift in geographic space that has already been provided by modernity's various technologies and related changes in structures of recognition.

Notes

[1] The quotation is from a Benetton Service Corporation press release, 1994.

[2] Augustus' geographic understanding is elaborated in Nicolet 1991.

[3] On the necessity for combat for upward mobility among the ruling classes, see Harris 1979, and for the inducements used to recruit troops, see Hopkins 1978.

[4] This Thatcher commitment and the contention between sovereignty and exchange impulses more generally is analyzed in my essay on sovereignty and exchange (1991).

[5] See for example, Jean Baudrillard's discussion of sign functions in a class system (1981, 29-62).

[6] This point of view on political economy is supplied by Lawrence Birken (1988, 31).

[7] "Mediascapes" is a term belonging to Arjun Appadurai (1990, 6-7).

[8] This is Appadurai's expression (1990, 1).

[9] Barthes has made the point in several places, but a good summary is in (1985, 10).

[10] The quotation is from a DeLillo essay on modernity's information culture that anticipated his *White Noise* (1983, 27).

[11] This part of the discussion also draws on ideas from Bryson's treatment of non-narrative painting (1988, 87).

[12] The expression belongs to Brian Massumi in his analysis of the structure of contemporary fear (1993, 24).

References

Agamben, Giorgio (1993) *The Coming Community*. Michael Hardt trans. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Appadurai, Arjun (1990) Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. *Public Culture* 2.2, 1-24.

Auerbach, Erich (1953) Odysseus' Scar. *Mimesis*. Willard R. Trask trans. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 3-23.

Back, Les and Quaade, Vibeke (1993) Dream Utopias, Nightmare Realities: Imaging Race and Culture within the World of Benetton Advertising. *Third text* 22, 65-79.

Barthes, Roland (1985) The Photographic Message. In *The Responsibility of Forms*. New York: Hill and Wang, 3-20.

Baudrillard, Jean (1981) Sign Function and Class Logic. In *For A Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*. Charles Levin trans. St. Louis: Telos, 29-62.

Benjamin, Walter and Lacis, Asja (1978) Naples. In Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*. Edmund Jephcott trans. New York: Schocken, 163-173.

Birken, Lawrence (1988) *Consuming Desires*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Braudel, Fernand (1977) *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*. trans. Patricia Ranum. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bryson, Norman (1988) Representing the Real: Gros' Paintings of Napoleon. *History of the Human Sciences* 1.1, 75-104.

Collier, Peter and Horowitz, David (1976) *The Rockefellers: An American Dynasty*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Crary, Jonathan (1990) *Techniques of the Observer*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix (1977) *The Anti-Oedipus*. Robert Hurley,

Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane trans. New York: Viking.
DeLillo, Don (1983) American Blood: A Journey through the Labyrinth of Dallas and JFK. *Rolling Stone* December, 21-28.
Editors' Comment (1989) *Public Culture* 2.3, i-iv.
Harris, William V. (1979) *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome* 327-70 B.C.. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Hopkins, Keith (1978) *Conquerors and Slaves*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Istvan, Rudyard L. (1988) Competing in the Fourth Dimension – Time. *Chief Information Officer Journal* 5, 5-10.
Leach, William. (1993) *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture*. New York: Pantheon.
Lopez, Barry (1986) *Arctic Dreams: Desire and Imagination in a Northern Landscape*. New York: Scribners.
Lynch, Christina (1993) The New Colors of Advertising: An Interview with Luciano Benetton. *Hemispheres* September. 23-25.
Massumi, Brian (1993) Everywhere you Want to Be: Introduction to Fear. In Brian Massumi (ed.), *The Politics of Everyday Fear*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 3-37.
Nicolet, Claude (1991) *Space, Geography, and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
O'Barr, William (1989) The Airbrushing of Culture: An Insider Looks at Global Advertising. William O'Barr Interviews Marcio M. Moreira. *Public Culture* 2.3, 1-19.
Patton, Cindy (1993) *Queer Peregrinations: Science and Travel*. Paper delivered at the 34th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Acapulco, March.
Ross, Andrew (1987/88) The Work of Nature in the Age of Electronic Transmission. *Social Text* 18, 116-128.
Shapiro, Michael J. (1991) Sovereignty and Exchange in the Orders of Modernity. *Alternatives* 16, 447-477.
Toscani, Oliviero (1991) Profile: Casual But Smart. *Creative Review* April, 19-22.
Veyne, Paul (1982) The Inventory of Differences. trans. Elizabeth Kingdom, trans. *Economy and Society* 11.2, 173-197.
Virilio, Paul and Lotringer, Sylvere (1983) *Pure War*. Mark Polizotti, trans. New York: Semiotext(e).
Waxman, Sharon (1993) The True Colors of Luciano Benetton. *Washington Post* February 17, B-1 & B-4.

Jukka Kanerva

On Benetton's Ecumenical Fantasy

Introductory Remarks

My paper analyses the phenomenon of Benetton's photos, especially from the viewpoint of their limits. The starting point is Professor Shapiro's article. The following remarks have common points with the ideas he presents, but alternative suggestions and approaches have been delineated as well. The main difference here may be in the discussion of Benetton's "ecumenical drive", which I interpret from the reverse perspective, bracketing off (but not rejecting) the 'overkilling' elements of Benetton's ads, and stressing instead the invisible limits of their possibilities.

It is a bit difficult to choose the themes from a large variety of possibilities. At first the break between photographer Oliviero Toscani and the producers of the company's advertising campaigns appeared to be a promising object of analysis. However, I could not get further information about this conflict apart from a short newspaper comment.

Another theme to be excluded is photography as such. Obviously, the material Benetton offers consists of photos, and the nature of the material source should be taken into account. I have no competence to discuss photos as a form of art. Instead, my approach derives from political theory and media rhetoric. Instead of following strictly any discipline or school of thought, I am simply trying

to identify some essential aspects in the issue under consideration.

Finally, Benetton's photos are advertisements aimed at accelerating the sales of clothes bearing the company label. Whether this point of view can and should be excluded from the analysis may be a subject of some disagreement. In any case, several distinctive features of the whole phenomenon will be traced back to this fact.

The following treatment of the issue is divided into two main sections. Firstly, the concept of *oikoumenon* deserves attention, as it is part of Shapiro's analysis. Secondly, a series of conceptions inspired by visual reception are analyzed. These points are partly of empirical nature, explaining reception experiences produced by some of Benetton's photos. These considerations are partly based on theoretical reasoning. These later issues are – or will touch upon – *models of reception*, *danger*, *provocation*, and *areas of silence*, or the rejected possibilities in the photos.

I Oikein: A World to be Inhabited

The word "ecumenical" originates in the Greek term *oikoumenikos*, meaning a world inhabited by 'our own people'. Related Greek concepts which have contributed greatly to political theory are *oikein*, to inhabit, and *oikos*, a house. Space, as a normative concept denoting ethical advantages in ruling the world remains a basic standard for this class of concepts.

Ruling and filling one's own space are assumed to be ethical principles, even *the* ethical principles of civilized life. In contrast to a people's own space, distant areas and peoples appear uncivilized, strange, ridiculous or dangerous. The exact attitudes depend on the empirical situation and experiences of the inhabitants of a given space. In its different forms, however, a minority position is the common feature of strangers.

In this respect, Aristotle's principle of *oikos* expresses the basic idea of the conception. *Oikos*, regarded as a system of power, consists of three relations: those between master and servant, father and child, and husband and wife. Men, "naturally prone to rule, like

an elder and experienced man suits better than a younger one, leaving aside completely unnatural relations" (Politics 1259b), are always higher in power hierarchies.

While each of these three relations have their own features, they all assume vertical power relations between the ruler and the ruled. In principle, this is not the case in a *polis*, with its communion of free men and a voluntarily made agreement. A commonplace political theory tends to stress this division, even dividing these spheres according to *fysis/ nomos.*

However, Aristotle remarks that these two entities have the same origin. Both of them are natural inclinations of men who are bound to live in certain political as well as private institutions. These relations cannot be voluntarily chosen (*prohairesis*), but have some natural ways of realization. (Politics, 1252a)

Consequently, *polis* is no contractual relation between free agents. 'Freedom' is not an ontological but a political and social category. In respect to larger teleological destinations, human beings are not free, but some men are free in their political and social contexts. While this aspect should not be exaggerated, in my view it is only fair to realize this essentialism in Aristotle's thinking.

Oikos, irrespective of the interpretation issue just mentioned, evidently creates no realm of freedom. Offering a rich variety of more or less despotic relations between men living in it, *oikos* seems to constitute a starting point for the term *ecumenical* in way that creates a background for imperialistic trends. The relation is not a causal link. Yet such linguistic sources claim their inheritances, even if in a rather complicated manner.

To *oikein* means to inhabit spaces which are worth living in. In the Greek language, this normative task can be seen in the concept of a *barbarian*. Those speaking the 'right' language call people with uncommon utterances barbars. Again, the principle of *oikoumenos* is ruling a space which is now language. Barbarians, people not talking a familiar language and also of minor value, living as menacing and ridiculous figures in the peripheries of linguistic orders, are common phenomena in all civilizations (Turunen 1993).

The later interpretation by Christian churches in their "ecumenical" pursuits only strengthens this normative stand. A Greek total-

ity of *oikoumenon* and *oceanos* was replaced by a new kingdom with no boundary at all, completely ruling over geographical, linguistic and spiritual realms. To use Shapiro's terms, physical geographies were fulfilled with moral geographies. New ideas and morals were contributed to the inhabitation strategies.

New modes of *oikein* the world had two remarkable advantages over the older ways of inhabitation. In practical terms, they were easier to move than military apparatuses. In addition, they offered a new totality overcoming the old dichotomy between 'us' and 'those barbarians'. The new principle called for a total unification in terms of physical, moral and ontological geography.

While breaking the old dichotomy and seeking a new unification, ecumenalism continued to rely on one truth. The new practice did not consist in giving up one's own primacy but in claiming that 'barbarians' no longer had a right to their barbarism. This did not remain a theoretical claim; it was vigorously carried out. To put it simply, the imperialism of attitudes was replaced by the imperialism of actions. The latter ruled space more efficiently.

After this schematic look at the origins of the conception of ecumenalism I return to Shapiro's way of linking Benetton and ecumenalism. According to Shapiro, Benetton can be seen as a modern pursuit of ecumenalism, a consciously build effort to rule global space. The very term 'global space' is vague enough to raise the question what exactly is the space pursued by the company. This issue will be discussed later.

When reading Shapiro's article, two issues suggested themselves for further consideration. Firstly, it is not evident how Shapiro's conception of Benetton can be united with the ecumenalism introduced above. Secondly, *oikoumenos*, as a space concept, implies spatial applications. Yet Shapiro strongly emphasizes temporal factors in his contribution. The first-mentioned issue will be treated next, the second one after a detailed analysis of danger, provocation, models of reception and areas of silence in Benetton's photos.

Shapiro's conception of Benetton seems to stress the 'democratic' features of the company's campaigns:

"Taking traditional racial, ethnic, and national sources of difference and antagonism, Benetton's United Colors campaign,

which through the 1980's represented a quiescent and amiable multiculturalism, produced an ecumenalism of image" (Shapiro, in this volume, 21).

Along with the pioneer, Coca Cola, Benetton battles against "global cultural detent" (ibid., 21). Shapiro quotes a Coca Cola advertising manager who found his most difficult challenge in "dealing with the Moslem regulations"(ibid., 22).

This remark shows the two-fold nature of the pursuit. New *ecumens*, like Benetton or Coca Cola, may introduce "amiable multiculturalism" globally. To be able to do this, however, they have to assume a flexible attitude towards "regulations", or, in many cases, openly offend the conventions of a given cultural sphere. Benetton's ecumenalism may thus imply both appeals to peace and equality and violent offensives against the conventions of local cultures.

Taking seriously the imperialistic background of ecumenalism, I am inclined to doubting the possibilities of this combination. We may assume that Benetton is a genuine ecumenical figure, or find that the company is a global contributor to antiracism and multiculturalism. Shapiro points out that Benetton played the latter role in the 1980s (Benetton's United Colors campaign). The above-mentioned dualism has disappeared in the 1990's, when Benetton has tightened the pace by using increasingly provocative measures. It was not until this decade that the company fully embraced ecumenalism.

The following section consideres Benetton's situation in the 1990s. A few key conceptions are chosen to depict the nature of its campaigns.

II Four Perspectives on Benetton's Photos

Reception

First of all, we have images and information about catastrophes and violence. We also know that these are pretty much the stuff of human history. Secondly – and this is where the reception and inter-

pretation of images begins – imagination binds the information and images to each other. Imagination is not only unfocused and ambulatory, it also lacks a sense of history. Nevertheless, when the pieces of information are transformed into experiences, they get more personal tones and become in some sense more real, at least to an individual experiencing threats. As time goes on, the production system re-presents the images over and over again and thereby produces cultural codes. The audience in turn get familiar signals to be consumed imaginatively and through experiences, but also materially in the form of clothes made by Benetton.

Of course, danger is only one part of the message suggested by Benetton's photos. Other features, such as equality and omnipresence, are also included in their reception possibilities. I will skip equality, which may be criticized because equality no doubt constitutes an important feature of these ads. My excuse is that the recent phase has largely ignored this feature, favouring rougher trends instead.

Danger

It is not immediately evident what is meant by *danger* in the photos. At the same time, a threatening atmosphere appears to be self-evident in photos which depict violence, blood and bones, seemingly displaying everyday life somewhere and for somebody.

Analytically, however, it is unlikely that any of the spectators will ever face most of the dangers suggested by the photos. It is one thing to seek pleasant mental states in which one can safely feel subject to threats, or to imagine such states of mind. It is quite a different matter to face the dangers physically and concretely. A middle-class shopper "alarmed" by the photos of Benetton experiences pleasant tremors of horror and aesthetic thrills, not objective threats.

Shapiro reminds us of the reality principles of observers. They are not bound to concentrate on any produced fears or threats; rather, their attention moves and drifts continuously without any external logic. So, in suggesting dangerous lifestyles and trends, Benetton's photos make it possible to experience threats, but not everybody watching them need to have such experiences.

Shapiro and DeLillo assign a different role to danger. According to them, social disruptions and dangers are transformed into mass production and mass consumption. This process is intentional and voluntary, at least to some extent. The media "soften" the immediate experiences in transforming them into cultural codes. Consequently, the audience will see representations and codes, instead of immediate and concrete threats.

Some years ago DeLillo published a book entitled "Mao II". It is probably not a literary masterpiece, since it so faithfully follows fashionable trends like terrorism. Yet it is an interesting text in discussing written, oral and pictorial utterances and their mutual relations. Philosophically, it contains a rich stock of ideas.

According to Shapiro, this is the context where Benetton's social dangers operate. We can agree with this view. Reproducing and revisualizing widely known catastrophes, Benetton benefits from public problems by connecting itself to events which draw worldwide attention. The company takes part in and makes use of social dangers. Standing out from the flow of visual information only requires more provocative means and focuses. However, before discussing these issues, we should perhaps present a somewhat more technical model of reception, or of the way in which quasi-dangerous situations or atmosphere are produced and assumed.

Omnipresence

Omnipresence, or the omnipresent features manifested in the photos, may be interpreted in several ways. One can lament with some justification that the visual omnipresence, with its intimacy and face-to-face nature, gradually destroys the political aspect, only transforming it into a more abstract way of participating in aesthetic experiences. Politics, defined as immediate conflicts, largely disappears and is transformed into an activity in which the citizen plays the role of eye-witness. In this way citizens may give up their possible role of militant participant and assume the much more passive role of observer.

This broad viewpoint exceeds the scope of this paper. One may only ask if the Baudelairean *flaneur*, an individual thrown onto the

street, is inclined to observing ongoing situations. This ambulatory character enjoys her/his aesthetic experiences but only in exceptional cases feels obliged to take part in political activities, even less so if these activities are not of visual nature.

Secondly, omnipresence can be said to be partly based on the continuous succession of photos. When Benetton's photos appear in one campaign after another, they become a trademark, being present everywhere and all the time, with only slight thematic variations. A global image of omnipresence can be created only by endless repetition of basic themes.

Shapiro writes about the sense of time in Benetton's logic. In my view, this logic of repetition, if we accept it as a major description of the process, can also be interpreted from the reverse perspective. In that case we conclude that the process will actually lead to the end of the experienced lapse of time. This way of advertising creates global spaces without real temporal changes in human life. It always depicts the same processes and elements (such as equality, ethnicity, sexuality and violence) of human experience, never suggesting that a day may come when all this will end or change completely. Thus, this way of advertising implicitly guarantees, or at least suggests, a kind of permanent existence for the audience. Even more explicitly, it posits that the structure of human experience will remain the same.

Provocation

My next point is about the need of provocation in Benetton's strategy. One immediately feels that the company's ads are provocative and draw attention. They provoke a variety of reactions, but their most important function is to attract the attention of the audience. Their *raison d'être* is to stand out from the rest.

The problem, however, is that standing out from the rest is a permanent necessity. So far Benetton has succeeded, but its position is being tested all the time. Perhaps the company will fail, completely or gradually, in its attempt to maintain its relative position. This prospect in turn will intensify the attempts to set the pace. However, the spiral of provocation cannot be endless.

The strategy of provoking attention tends to require increasingly efficient means to maintain the provocative effect. To be provocative is to be one step ahead of the others. Putting the brakes on this escalation process would entail the risk that the competitors overtake the trailblazer.

In my view, Benetton seems to be on the brink of this situation. It is unlikely to find ways which would essentially increase its provocative power without causing real damages to its fame among middle-class consumers, while moderating this strategy would amount to a gradual abandoning of the whole advertisement idea. It would be interesting to know if the conflict between Toscani and the producers involve these issues.

Among the limits of provocation strategies are the prevailing social conventions. Sexual behaviour and eroticism are allowed and even encouraged in Western societies in public, and violence is accepted as a commonplace. Their manifestations are ordinary, mass-produced and mass-consumed. But mixed together, as open sexual violence, these phenomena cannot serve any positive purpose in global advertisements. What I'm trying to say with this crude example is that in the Western world there are certain limits in advertising that can only be overstepped at one's peril.

Perhaps a more interesting and nuanced conception of these limits could be reached by assessing the circumstances in some societies in more detail. Thus, Scandinavian countries may have some limits typical of them only, while America has created its own particular conventions. Similarly, European contexts have their specific cultural sub-codes, while the Pacific setting displays its own rules, and so on.

Silence

When Benetton assumes a worldwide distribution and success for its campaigns, it has to adjust its photos to the hidden but real limits of reception in different cultural climates. Every society has its own taboos and prohibitions which are allowed to be manifested only indirectly, preferably not visually as in photos. The taboos are being transformed, but slowly. It would be interesting to examine in

detail the limits of permitted and prohibited visual performances in particular cases.

By way of speculation, I would like to refer to two aspects which seem to be silent, as far as I know, in Benetton's visual production. These aspects are aging and fatness. Of these two phenomena the former is unavoidable to all and the latter to about half of the people in the Western world.

However, these two phenomena seem to belong to the area of silence, despite their importance and universality. I find it difficult to imagine how a company that sells clothes could make successful ads depicting aged and fat people. Everything obviously depends on how themes are realized, but I think that this may be one area where the possibilities of successful campaigns are fairly limited.

If it is true that Benetton, like so many other advertisers, omit ageing and old-aged people from their ads, this silence seems to confirm what I said earlier about omnipresent features without time. No personal growth and decline will have room in the photos.

If this is the case, Benetton's photos manifest an ontology which stresses the contingent and random features of reality and omit other, more determined and historical explanations of events and incidents. Occasions come and go, and people are thrown into situations or, more precisely, are portrayed in the contingent situations of everyday life.

The ecumenical effort, an audacious attempt to extend one's *oikoumenon* to rule the whole world, produces an excessive burden, since it at the same time requires the execution of a normative programme and a striving to define and dominate the *oikoumenon* objectively, to make it the inevitable destiny of everyone.

Benetton, tending to choose the former strategy and displaying the themes of danger and provocation, is testing its limits. A natural choice from the company, one might add. A church would accept another alternative, a dominion over *oikoumenon* without any programme.

Ari Turunen

Centers and Peripheries

The Construction Of Ecumenical Space on World Maps

The ancient Greeks and medieval Christians called the known and the inhabitable world "ecumene" (oikoumene). For them the term "ecumene" meant a (psycho)geographical entity. The modern version of ecumene is a map, because maps are thought to represent a coherent totality of known space. In this article I am interested in how this known ecumenical space is interpreted, constructed and represented on different world maps. I argue that the construction of space, on ancient as well as modern world maps, is metaphorical in character and strongly related to world view in general. By studying spatial tropes such as center and periphery, one can see how different cultures have inscribed themselves visually in space in their attempts to create a politically acceptable world view, an ecumene, on a map.

We usually look at maps as if they were objective representations of the world. But, as every cartographer knows, no map of the globe on flat paper can be totally "true". The problem comes when people forget this fact[1]. As Arthur Robinson has pointed out, our mental maps are generated from what we look at. Most mental maps come from ordinary maps, and a particular map seen regularly will look familiar after a while and thus "look right". This, according to Robinson, can cause one's mental map of the world to become per-

manently warped.[2] The striking power of maps is thus based on their visuality. Images of maps and thus mental pictures about the world remain in memory "like delineators of spatially fixed world[3]". When seeing is understood as believing it easily leads us to believe that the form of representation used in cartography is realistic. Moreover, we often forget that many basic structures of our world view are really based on images and visual forms of communication. According to Finnish media researcher Veijo Hietala, our perception of the world and the geographical locations of different countries can be represented only by the globe or by a map. Describing the world in words would simply be an impossible task[4].

Maps, like all other images, are powerful because they do not demand the same intellectual effort as other forms of communication. For example, we read texts more critically than we "read" images. In Mark. S. Monmonier's words: "We are often graphically and cartographically illiterate"[5]. In order to read maps from a rhetorical point of view I concentrate on the structuration of space. Structuration refers to the catrographer's interpretation of space and his particular orientation within it. Those interpretations always create images of what the world is *believed* or *wanted* to be. Maps are thus never free from their cultural context or the motives of their makers. The cartographer's prior interpretation suggests that a map is part of the strategy of deduction and affirmation that Chaim Perelman has called *demonstration*. In demonstration the rules of deduction have already been made. It is the way to force the "right" conclusion to emerge.[6] In this way a map simply demonstrates and makes visible the cartographer's interpretation of the world.

The "right" conclusion refers to a politically acceptable world view. Alan K. Henrikson has argued that a map is a visual analogue to political and other facts in their geographical setting: maps can have iconic value because they represent hierarchies and locations symbolically.[7] The hierarchization of space takes the form of the rule: the more powerful a place, the more prominently it is represented on a map[8]. According to J.B. Harley, that kind of hierarchization resembles the "rule of ethnocentricity", which has led many societes to place their own territories at the center of their world maps. Throughout the history of cartography, ideological

'Holy Lands' have been frequently centered on maps. Such centricity, argues Harley, is a kind of 'subliminal geometry' which adds geopolitical force and meaning to representation. Such world maps have helped to legitimate and promote different world views[9].

This hierarchization refers to the cartographer's spatial orientation of the world, which is metaphorical in character. Mark Lakoff and George Johnson have argued that a metaphor does not only refer to language, but also to thought and action. Metaphors are pervasive in everyday life, because our ordinary conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical by nature. According to Lakoff and Johnson, our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people.[10] I am interested in how these metaphors operate on different world maps. As far as maps are concerned, the most relevant metaphors are those which Lakoff and Johnson call *orientational metaphors*. These metaphors, like up–down, in–out, front–back, on–off, central–peripheral refer to spatial orientation. These spatial orientations arise from the fact that we have particular kind of bodies that function as they do in our physical environment.[11] These orientational metaphors appear on maps as *spatial tropes*. The most essential spatial tropes are central–peripheral and up–down because every world map has its centers and peripheries as well as orientations which refer to 'up' and 'down'.

Ethnocentrism in Maps: From Oikoumene To Ecumene

Recently many scholars have questioned the role of "neutral" space. Space (or "profane" geography) is no longer comprehended only as a mathematical-geometric abstraction. Indeed, space makes the difference. As Henri Lefebvre has pointed out, space is a political and ideological construction. It is literally filled with ideologies[12]. For example, topography – like cartography – is not a value-free science, because it describes boundaries, secures norms and defines property relations. That is why topography and cartography can be considered "the sciences of domination.[13]"

The politics of space is primarily based on the way space is represented. One must give a meaning to space in order to represent it. The way space is represented and then converted into a *place* is political. The purpose of all representations is to turn something unfamiliar into familiar[14]. In order to make space meaningful and familiar, we have to represent it *with* certain connotations. By giving a meaning to space we create a certain image of a place. These images are intentional interpretations of what is or what is believed to be[15]. By representing a place we attribute to it an iconic and symbolic meaning. Geographical space is thus not objective but full of significance – it has colour, depth, associations and symbols[16].

In cartography the politics of space can be seen in the way in which the cartographer situated in a center represents the periphery. It is commonly believed that the periphery is subordinated to a dominant center. The following example of Chinese cartography illustrates how this dominance of the center has been metaphorically promoted also on maps.

> "...The Chinese had already printed many world maps in which entire space was filled with the fifteen provinces of China, and around them a little sea in which they indicated certain little islands called by the names of all the kingdoms, as many as they knew, and these united all together made only a small province of China. With this image of the size of their kingdom, and the smallness of the rest of the world they were proud, and it appeared to them that the rest of the world was barbarian and uncouth in comparison. Nor did they expect to be subject to foreign masters. When they saw the world so large, however, and China appearing so small in a corner, the more ignorant made fun of the map..."[17]

This story was told at the end of the 16th century by Portuguese missionary Matteo Ricci. He presented a Europe-centered world map to the Chinese, who called their country *Central Country*. The story reveals a confused meeting of the representatives of two cultures, two world views and two centers who considered each other to be situated on the periphery.

Samuel Y. Edgerton has called this phenomenom, a centristic

world view, an *omphalos syndrome*[18]. According to Greek mythology, the omphalos was the navel of the earth situated in the temple of Delphi. Every culture suffers from this syndrome. The *Kaabah* in Mecca, *Mundus* in Rome, *Mt. Meru* for Hindus, *ziggurrats* in Babylon, Jerusalem for medieval Christians, even the *Greenwich meridian* in London – all propagate the very same idea: that one is in the center of the world.

(Ethno)centrism has partly developed from the profoundly mythical and religious idea of constructing the cosmos from the state of chaos. The creation of the cosmos has to take place at the center of the cosmos. Moreover, as Mircea Eliade has pointed out, each of these sacred places was considered and even literally called the "Centre of the World[19]." According to Eliade, this ritually constructed mythic geography has more significance to people than the "normal" geography:

> "What we have here is a sacred, mythic geography, the only kind effectually *real*, as opposed to profane geography, the latter being 'objective' and, as it were, abstract and non-essential – the theoretical construction of a space and a world that we do not live in, and therefore do not *know*."[20]

When one looks at the ancient world maps of different cultures, one is struck by the similarities of their design. The world is usually represented as round, and it is surrounded by the ocean. These maps can be called cosmographical because they are images of the cosmos. The round shape represents the circularity of heaven, perfection and eternity. In eastern religions a circle (mandala) is considered to be a way to spiritual enlightenment[21]. The Romans argued that one could not draw geographical borders without reference to the order of the universe. The borders (Orbis Terrarum) should follow the shape of the sun and the movements of its axis [22]. These borders were considered the edges of the world, which divided space into the inhabitable cosmos and the uninhabitable chaos.

Cosmographical maps thus divided the "real" people (those who lived in the cosmos) from non-humans (those who lived in chaos). Real people dwelled in the known world, which the Greeks called *oikoumene* and medieval Christians *ecumene*. Oikoumene thus

meant a world which was inhabitable. Outside the oikoumene lay a chaotic place populated by barbarians and monsters. As John Block Friedman has pointed out, "extremes of all sorts could be imagined as 'marks of vice'. The farther from a geographical center, the more extreme a thing was and therefore the more 'vice' it was."[23]

The best known map of the Greeks was drawn by Hecataeus of Miletus during the 6th century B.C. (Fig.1). In the middle of the map are Greece and Delfoi, the holy place. According to Hecataeus, the oikoumene stretches to Indus, Arabia, Caspian Sea and Central Europe. The Caspian Sea (Mare Hyrcanum) is represented as a bay of Oceanus. Although all Greeks did not agree with the shape of his map[24] there was a consensus as far as peripherial areas were concerned. Beasts, monsters, barbarians and cannibals were thought to dwell on the outermost edge of oikoumene or outside it. According to Herodotus and Hippocrate, cannibals dwelled in the areas near Tanais (the river Don) and Mare Hyrcanum. The Western part of Libya was inhabited by wild beasts as well as dog-headed and headless men.[25]

Fig. 1

The best known Roman map was made 12 B.C. by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa. On this map (Fig.2) the Rome is placed at the center. The circle of the world, Orbis Terrarum, stretches to India and Sri Lanka (Tabrobane). Pliny the Elder referred to Agrippa in his *Historia Naturalis* (77 A.D). Pliny wrote that cannibals dwelled in Scythia, while satyres, dog-headed and one-legged men inhabited India[26]. It is interesting that China is not represented on Agrippa's map, although the Romans and the Chinese were aware of each other.

Fig. 2

The same politics of exclusion can be found on the Chinese cosmographical map (Fig. 3). There is no reference whatsoever to Romans[27]. The Chinese land mass is surrounded by an island-dotted ocean stream, beyond which lies another ring of land, the real periphery. At the center is China, The Middle Country, and the outhermost part of the Chinese ecumene is the dwelling place of uncivilized savages.

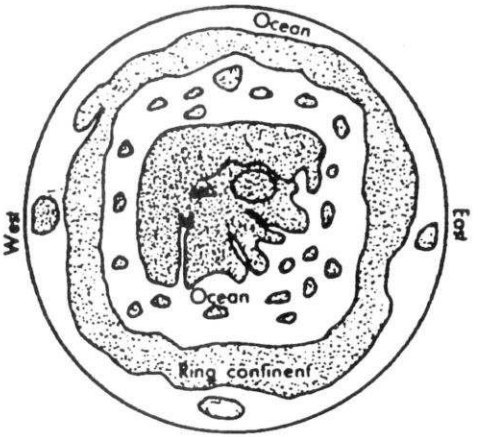


Fig. 3

Fig. 4

The Arabic map (Fig.4) from the 12th century also follows the familiar cosmographical design. At the center is Mecca. South is at the top. According to Arab cartographer Il-Idrisi, in the far north (Norway, Finland) lived faceless savages who dwelled in trees. In the farthest south (Sansibar, Indonesia) lived black cannibals with tails[28].

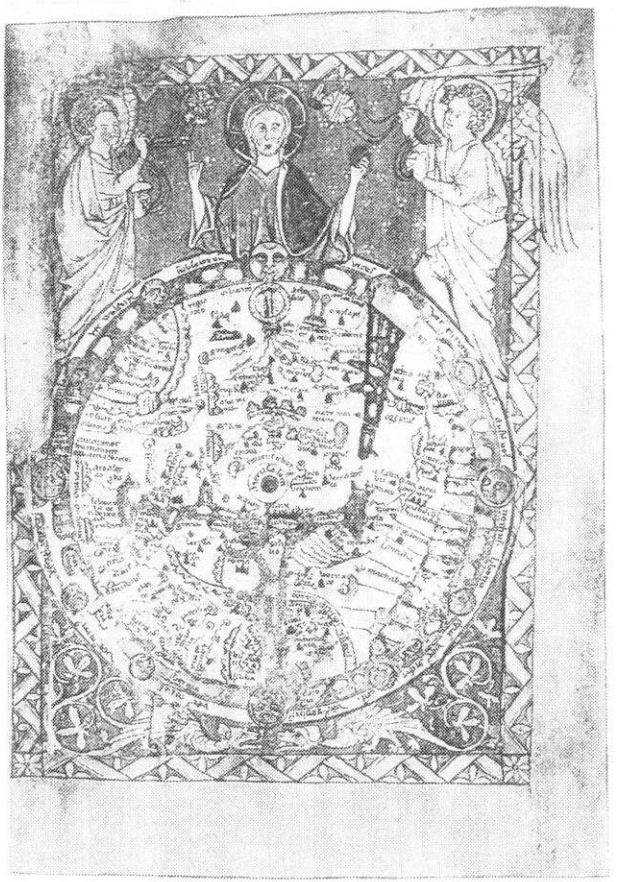


Fig. 5

The political meaning of oikoumene or ecumene manifests itself most clearly on medieval world maps (Fig.5). The term "ecumenical" referred to the inhabited Christian world. At the center of ecumene is Jerusalem and the Christian world, or at least the world Christians wanted to be Christianized. This can be seen in many medieval maps in which the world is represented literally as if it were under the blessing hands of Christ. Various monsters, like dog-headed cannibals, are placed outside the cosmological ring, which circles the ecumene.

On the map East was placed at the top because paradise was thought to be situated in the East and also because Asia was the birthplace of Christianity. The East situated at the top of a map is by its essence an orientational metaphor – in fact, the very term *orientation* refers to mapping and also to the *Orient*, East.

In the 14th and 15th centuries there were also more accurate maps avalaible, like portolan maps used by sailors, but they did not have the same metaphorical value as the cosmographical *mappaemundis*. Lloyd A. Brown has pointed out that maps full of colourful iconography were more popular than accurate maps[29].

The symbolic, religious iconography of the mappaemundis fit well into the cosmology of the common medieval individual. The medieval mappaemundis provided a familiar and "ordered" Christian world view which did not contradict the dogmas of the church fathers.

* * *

The cosmographical maps in Asia and Europe clearly gave a political meaning to periphery. The maps used spatial tropes such as up–down and in–out. The good was in the ecumene and the bad lay outside it. This was a traditional spatial construction. Medieval cartographers relied on the writings of Isidorus of Seville, who referred to Pliny the Elder, who in turn referred to Herodotus. For example, these old stories of monsters in remote regions were simulated, canonized and thus established as official symbols of periphery. The cartographers of the time suffered from a kind of *vacui horror*, that is the fear of emptiness. There were many "empty" places on the maps which needed to be given a specific, often negative, meaning.

As Mircea Eliade has noted, the structure of cosmology is often geometrical (and geographical):

> "At the limits of this closed world begins the domain of the unknown and the formless. On this side there is ordered space; on the other, outside this familiar space, there is the unknown and dangerous region of the demons, the ghosts, the dead and the foreigners – in a word, chaos or death or night."[30]

The examples from cartography show that maps also promoted this mythical world view based on the dichotomy of chaos and cosmos. The cosmographical maps, according to Edgerton, promoted "exclusive inward-directed worldviews, each with its separate cult center buffered within territories populated only by true believers.[31]"

The World as a Theater

During the Renaissance the geographical world view changed gradually in Europe. The old cosmographical design in cartography was replaced with a more accurate and mathematical map form. The mathematical principles and maps of Claudios Ptolemy were rediscovered, and at the same time a new invention, perspective, was introduced. Eventually the world was presented on a map as a mathematical *projection*.

With the help of Ptolemy's grid system, maps began to have geographical and mathematical value. The coordinate framework created a new concept of space. Europeans began to be conscious of the fact that the world was conquerable[32] because one could imagine and contemplate the space beyond the horizon.

Although Ptolemy's grid system and "visual axis" was very scientific with a non-ideological center, it still promoted a new kind of centrism. As Edgerton has pointed out, Ptolemy's map satisfied the innate human desire to have the visual image of the world organized according to some higher universal ordering system. Ptolemy's system depended on the quantifying eye of the human observer, who was now able to imagine himself detached from the world as if the world were on a stage[33].

Edgerton argues that what Ptolemy's cartographic system did to the psychology of map making, was exactly what linear perspective did to the psychology of looking at pictures[34]. By condensing the whole world to the single eye of the spectator, perspective created the feeling that the spectator was the unique center of the world. In the 16th century maps were thus called *theaters*. The world perceived as a theatre is an interesting orientational metaphor, which suggests a whole new idea of centrism. The ideological center is no longer situated spatially on a map, because the center is now con-

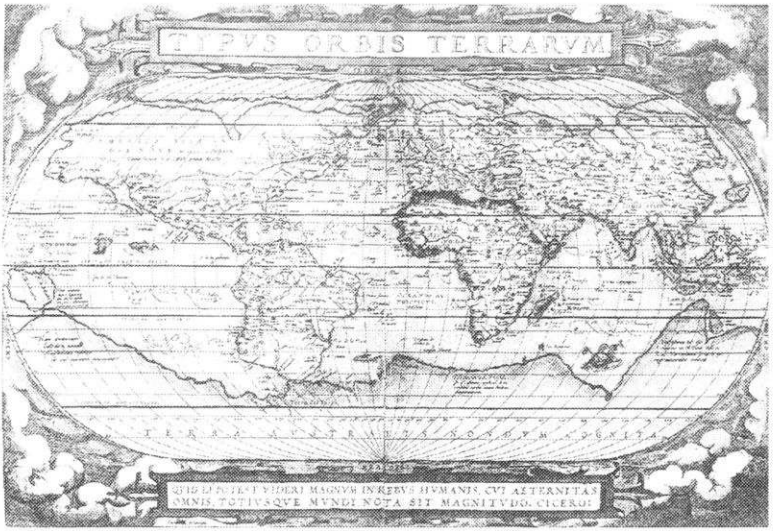


Fig. 6

stituted by a single spectator. It is the map maker as a spectator who organizes and formulates the world. Although explorers revealed new places to the European audience, it was through the cartographer that the audience got the image of the New World. For example, the famous cartographers of the 16th century, Abraham Ortelius and Gerardus Mercator thought that knowledge of geography is "the eye of the history" and a description of the known world, and history is "the eye of the world, Oculus Mundi"[35]. Abraham Ortelius even represented the new map of the world (Orbis Terrarum) as if the whole of the world was discovered under the clouds (Fig. 6). It was through the eye of the cartographer who literally discovered and historialized the hidden secrets of Mother Earth.

Modern Ecumenes

It was not until the 19th century when spatially promoted ideological centers began to reappear on European world maps, mainly because of imperialistic reasons. Maps were used to create an image of a new ecumene, the Europeanized world. They were used to legitimise the reality of conquest and the European empire[36].

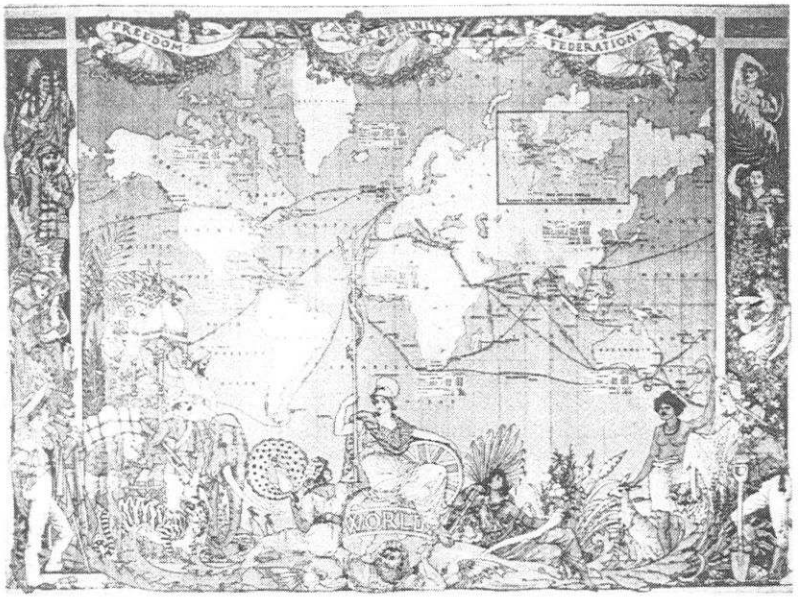


Fig. 7

The British Imperium Federation map (Fig. 7) in Mercator's projection from 1886 exhibits a very European and especially a very British world view. The prime meridian demonstrates that London is the navel of the world, and the ship routes emphasize this by connecting the other parts of the world to London. Britannia is sitting on the throne, which is the globe. The globe is chrushing Atlas who can not hold the world any more.

The most common world map used during the period of imperialism was this Mercator's rectangular projection. Gerardus Mercator developed his projection primarily for navigation purposes in 1569. Later its other characteristics were noticed. Mercator's projection was used as a powerful ideological weapon. It came to be used as a general world map, although (or because) it hugely distorts the size of landmasses. It exaggerates the size of Europe and also places Europe in the center by dropping the Antarctic out of sight. (Fig. 8a, see opposite page) Many critics have suggested that Mercator's projection still reinforces the European sense of

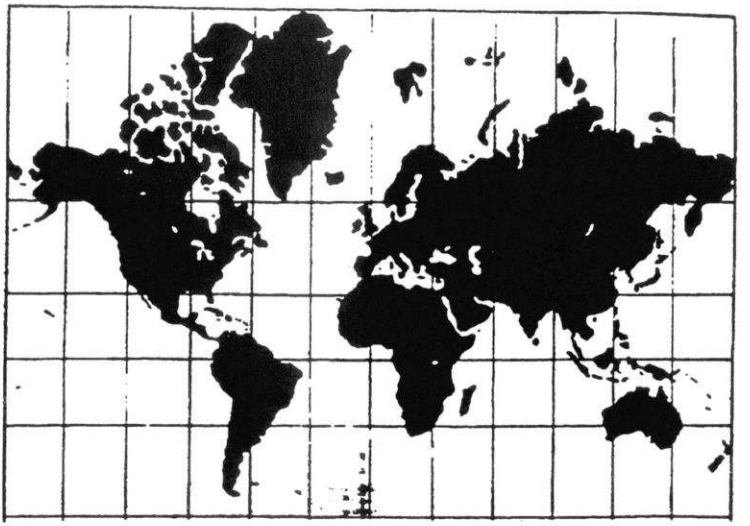


Fig. 8a

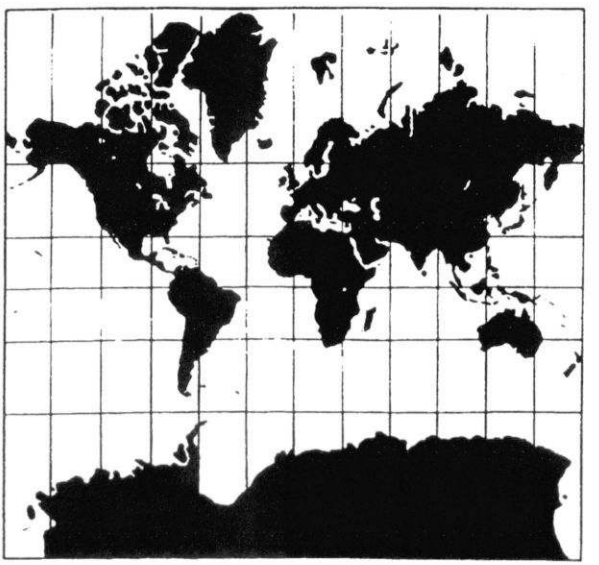


Fig. 8b

superiority in that the former colonies at lower latitudes appear smaller than they really are.

Although colourful iconography has vanished from the maps used today, they still have hidden messages as Fig. 8a suggests. As Denis Wood has pointed out, if there is iconism in a modern map, it is always at the level of the system in the structure of the map[37]. By dropping out the Antarctic the map creates a representation of the world that is familiar to Europeans. Otherwise the world would appear somehow ridiculous (Fig. 8b, see previous page) and "unrealistic" to Europeans, because they have become accustomed to the familiar spatial tropes.

Denis Wood calls this kind of familiarity "tectonic code". The tectonic code traffics in the spatial concepts of *distance*, *direction* and *extent*. In moulding the map image, the tectonic code allows it to refer to the space which we occupy and experience. It is laden with our preconceptions about space. What is most important: "a map projection pretends to validate our cultural centrism, because it allows us to view the world as we choose with whatever distortions we like."[38]

The geographical toponyms we use also reveal our preconceptions of space. The expansion of European culture has created such concepts as the *New World*, the *Near East* and the *Far East*. These concepts become only logical when we remember how Europe is situated on *our* world map.

The psychological significance of these concepts is thus remarkable. Although from a European point of view the Far East is geographically as far as California, we do not use the concept *Far West* to refer to California. Even Californians refer to China being in the Far East, although China is not geographically East of California. This means that *psychologically,* the West ends in California. Americans have thus retained the European toponyms, although they see themselves situated at the center (Fig. 9, see opposite page). In the middle of the 19th century Americans created new world maps in which America was at the center and the prime meridian went through Washington. To Americans the Washington zero meridian was an important national symbol used against the meridian of Greenwich, which was regarded as a vestige of colonial subordina-

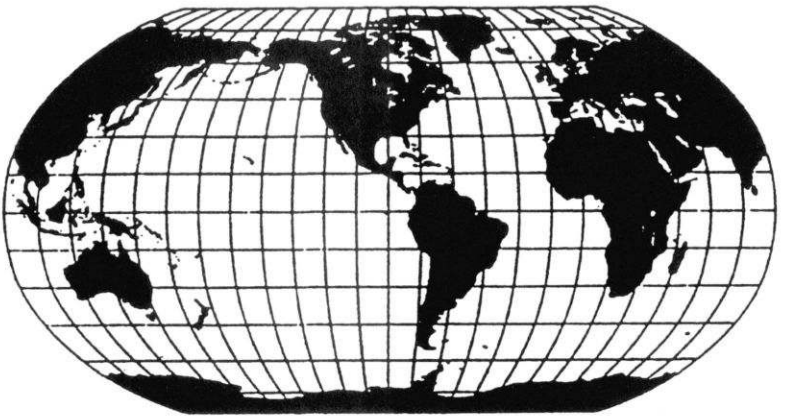


Fig. 9

tion. According to Henrikson, the difference between America and Europe was defined only negatively, in contradistinction to Europe, and *countergeography* was one of the methods of emphasizing this logic.[39]

From an Asian point of view certain geographical concepts are totally illegitimate. According to Japanese politician Miki Takeo, to refer to Japan situated in the Far East is degrading. It is Europe that should be dropped from its central place also on the conceptual level, argues Takeo[40]. On the geographical level Europe obviously does not occupy a central position in the Japanese and Chinese world maps. In fact, the Chinese world map (Fig. 10, see following page) places China at the center also by stating that the map demonstrates "the geographical location of China". The interplay of a map and the term "geographical location" strengthens the impression that China's location is at the center of the world.

The term by which Australia is often referred to is *down-under*. Because *under* used as an orientational metaphor connotes something humble, this strongly laden concept is challenged on the Aus-

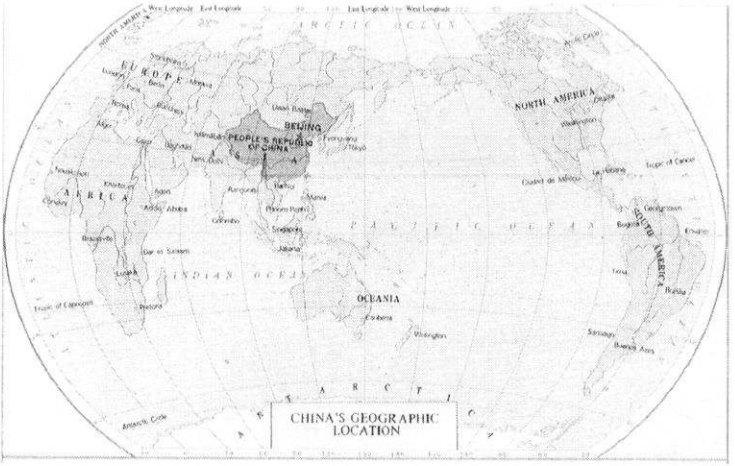


Fig. 10

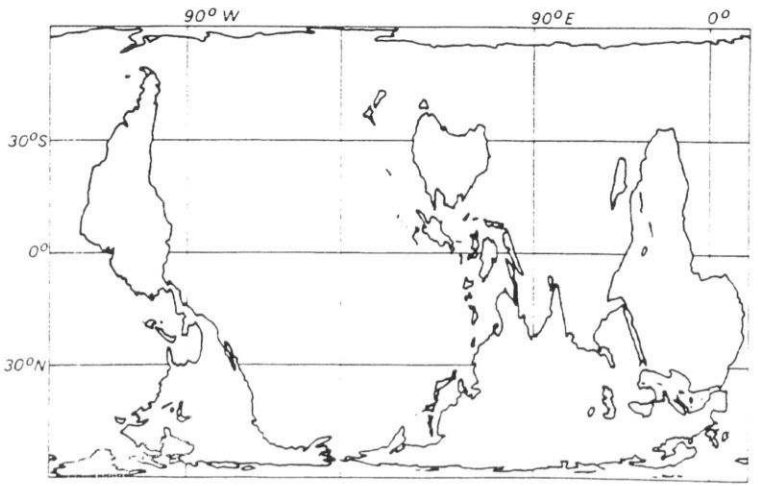


Fig. 11

tralian "down-under map of the world" (Fig. 11). According to Australian map makers,[41] no apologies are called for in presenting the map with south at the top. The argument goes: "After hundreds of years of development, southern lands have no reason to be "below" the northern hemisphere countries." Furthermore, Australians no

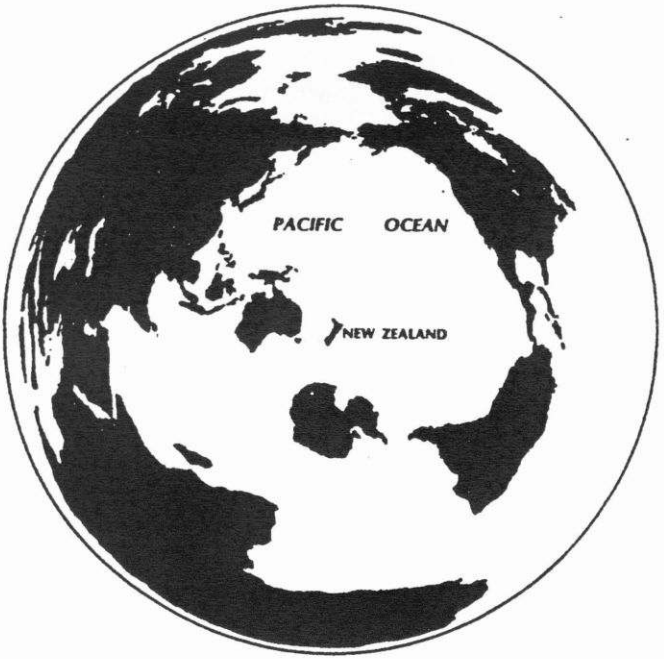


Fig. 12

longer refer to Japan, for example, as being in the Far East. From the Australian point of view Japan is not in the East and not very far either. For Australians, Japan is actually situated in the *Near North*. Accordingly it is Europe which is far away, on the periphery. Even more radical is a world map made in New Zealand. In this map one can hardly notice Europe at all (Fig. 12). Although these Australian and New Zealandian maps are curiosities, they reflect well the changing spatial attitudes of both nations[42].

* * *

According to Mark Lakoff and George Johnson, orientational metaphors like up–down, near–far, central–peripheral can vary from culture to culture[43]. the grounds of the different world maps one can, however, argue that at least "up", "central" and "peripheral"

are perceived in a very similar way across cultures. One's own group is always at the center, never on the periphery and "down". With spatial tropes used on maps, nations can redefine their real and desired places in the world. Of course, maps can and are used as political manifestations but they are also vehicles for counter-attacking the colonialist situation whereby European maps have created a self-privileging authority[44].

In today's world politics, one should be aware of *political correctness* also on the geographical level. World maps reflect the images different peoples have about "their" world. "Our" world may differ radically from "their" world, and only an acceptance of this fact allows the possibility of a real heterotopy – an ability to understand different ways of seeing the world from literally different *perspectives*. Otherwise "our" world view remains a very narrow view of the "real" world.

Notes

[1] Wright 1993, 41.
[2] Robinson 1987, 261.
[3] Gunn 1988, 201.
[4] Hietala 1993, 12.
[5] Monmonier 1991, 3.
[6] Perelman 1971, 13-17.
[7] Henrikson 1980, 75.
[8] Harley 1989, 7.
[9] Ibid, 6.
[10] Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 3.
[11] Ibid, 14.
[12] Lefebvre 1976, 30.
[13] Duncan and Ley 1993, 1.
[14] Moscovici 1984, 25.
[15] Ibid, 56.
[16] Relph 1976, 17.
[17] Edgerton 1987, 26 (cit.).
[18] Ibid.
[19] Eliade 1969, 39.
[20] Ibid.

[21] Sack 1980, 49.
[22] Rykwert 1976, 91.
[23] Friedman 1981, 35.
[24] Herodotus (book IV), for example, was amused to see "many people producing the circular maps for no good reason." Aristotle (Meteorologica, cit. Kish 1978, 39) also argued that the maps which represented the inhabited earth as circular were absurd on theoretical grounds.
[25] Warmington 1973, 97, 127.
[26] Pliny the Elder, Book V.
[27] Tuan 1974, 38.
[28] Al-Azmeh 1992, 12-14.
[29] Brown 1950, 87.
[30] Eliade, 37-38.
[31] Edgerton, 27.
[32] Harvey 1989, 246.
[33] Edgerton, 37-38.
[34] Ibid, 97.
[35] Rabasa 1985, 5.
[36] Harley 1988, 282.
[37] Wood 1992, 68.
[38] Ibid, 91.
[39] Henrikson, 77.
[40] Korhonen 1992, 167-168.
[41] Gregory's Down-Under Map of the World, 1992.
[42] The trade minister of New Zealand Philip Burdon has pointed out in the interview (Newsweek 29.11. 1993), that Australia and New Zealand have changed their cultural identity. The connection to Europe is only historical.
[43] Lakoff & Johnson, 14.
[44] Huggan 1991, 129.

References

Al-Azmeh, Aziz (1992) Barbarians In Arab Eyes. *Past & Present* 134, Febryary, 3-18.

Brown, Lloyd. A (1950) *The Story of Maps*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Duncan, James & David Ley (1993) Introduction: Representing the Place of Culture. In James Duncan and David Ley (eds.), *Place/Culture/ Representation*. London and New York: Routledge.

Edgerton, Samuel Y (1987) From Mental Matrix to Mappamundi to Christian Empire: The Heritage of Ptolemaic Cartography in the Renaissance. In David Woodward (ed.), *Art and Cartography. Six Historical Essays*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Eliade, Mircea (1969) *Images and Symbols. Studies in Religious Symbolism*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Friedman, John Block (1981) *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*. Cambridge, Massachussetts and London: Harvard University Press.

Gunn, Angus M (1988) Mapping the Pacific. *Social Education* March, 201-202.

Harley, J.B (1988) Maps, Knowledge and Power. In Denis Gosgrove and Stephen Daniels (eds.), *Iconography of Landscape. Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harley, J.B (1989) Deconstructing the Map. *Cartographica* Summer, 1-20.

Harvey, David (1986) *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Basill Blackwell.

Henrikson, Alan K. (1980) America's Changing Place in the World: From "Periphery" to "Centre"? In Jean Gottman (ed.), *Centre and Periphery, Spatial Variation in Politics*. Beverly Hills and London: Sage.

Herodotus (1971) *Herodotus in four Volumes 2*. Books III and IV. London: Heinemann.

Hietala, Veijo (1993) *Kuvien todellisuus: Johdatusta kuvallisen kulttuurin ymmärtämiseen*. Jyväskylä: Gummerus.

Huggan, Graham (1991) Decolonizing the Map: Post-Colonialism, Post-Structuralism and the Geographic Connection. In Ian Adam and Helen Tiffin (eds.), *Past. The Last Post. Theorizing Post-Colonialism and Post-Modernism*. New York: Harvester.

Kish, George (1978) *A Source Book In Geography*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press.

Korhonen, Pekka (1992) *The Origin of the Idea of the Pacific Free Trade Area. A Study of Japanese Rhetorical Categories and Discussion on International Integration 1945-1968*. Dissertation. Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research, no 92, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä.

Lakoff, George Johnson Mark (1980) *The Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Lefebvre, Henri (1976) Reflections on the Politics of Space. *Antipode* 8, 30-37.

Monmonier, Mark S (1991) *How to Lie with Maps*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
Moscovici, Serge (1984) The Phenomenon of Social Representations. In Robert Farr and Serge Moscovici (eds.), *Social Representations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Perelman, Chaim and Olbrechts-Tyteca, Lucie (1971) *The New Rhetoric. A Treatise on Argumentation*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.
Pliny The Elder (1991) *Natural History. A Selection*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
Rabasa, Jose (1985) Allegories of Atlas. In Francis Barker et al. (eds.), *Europe and its Others*. Colchester: University of Essex.
Relph, E (1976) *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion.
Robinson, Arthur (1987) Reflections on the Gall-Peters Projection. *Social Education* April/May, 260-264.
Sack, Robert David (1980) *Conceptions of Space in Social Thought, a Geographic Perspective*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Tuan, Yi-Fu (1974) *Topophilia. A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
Warmington, E.H (1973) *Greek Geography*. New York: J.M Dent & Sons.
Wood, Denis and Felsh, John (1986) Designs on Signs: Myths and Meaning in Maps. *Cartographica* no. 3, 54-104.
Wright, David R, (1993) Maps with a Message. *Geographical Magazine* January, 37-41.

Maps

Fig. 1. Hecataeus. J.B Harley & David Woodward (eds.) (1987): History of Cartography Vol 1. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London. P. 135.
Fig. 2. M.Vipsanius Agrippa: Orbis Terrarum. Social Education (1991). September. P. 303.
Fig. 3. The Chinese Cosmographical Map. Yi-Fu Tuan (1977): Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience. Edward Arnold, London. P. 48.
Fig. 4. Il-Idrisi. Leo Bagrow (1964): History of Cartography. C.A Watts, London. P. 57.
Fig. 5. The Medieval Psalter Map. Leo Bagrow (1964). Plate XVIII.
Fig. 6. Abraham Ortelius: Typus Orbis Terrarum. Visual Communication 1984, 3. P. 39.

Fig. 7. The British Imperial Federation Map. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, eds. (1988): Iconography of Landscape. Cambridge University Press. P. 283.

Fig. 8. The Mercator's Projections. Social Education, April 1987. P. 261.

Fig. 9. Robinson Projection. Social Education, October 1990. P. 395.

Fig. 10. Map of the People's Republic of China. Cartographic Publishing House, Beijing 1980.

Fig. 11. The turnabout Map of Peter Vujakovic. Geography April 1989. P. 104.

Fig. 12. Azimuthal Equidistant Projection. New Zealand. Martin Glassner & Harm J. De Blij (1989): Systematic Political Geography. John Wiley, New York. P. 240.

II The Rhetoric of Images

Kimmo Lehtonen

On the Relationship between Visuality and Rhetoric

Introduction

Rhetoric as a term was originally used to describe eloquence or speech competence, such as the ability to persuade and convince. In this article I apply the term to photography. My goal is to "fix" attention where I think it belongs when dealing with the rhetoric of photography – on the photograph itself.

Media research has widened rhetoric to include technologically aided messages and to describe internal occurrences in the transfer of these messages. Media rhetoric takes an interest in the mass media (above all TV and the press), massmediated art (e.g. movies, videos, multimedia, etc.), and the interaction between sender and receiver. One could conclude that this research orientation introduces rhetoric as a theoretical term describing the nature of influence via the message rather than of eloquence in the message itself. Therefore I pass over this aspect and move on to other approaches.

An interesting way to introduce the problem of rhetoric in photography is to put practical and theoretical experience into a dialogue with one another. Frank Webster[1], a specialist in photojournalism and magazine illustration, regards rhetoric as one of the major concerns in the development and rebuilding of ethos and its

consequences in a professional photographer's education and work, while the well-known Russian semiotician Yuri Lotman[2] discusses theoretically the role of rhetoric in artistic expression. Culture – or more precisely, visual culture – brings these two writers together. As Lotman (and his colleagues) makes several observations in the same field where Webster operates, I have an opportunity to polemize them both.

Webster classifies his critical approach to the ethos of technology as sociology, whereas for semiotics the rhetorical approach amounts rather to research on the production of signs and meaning. Semiotics cannot be equated with media research and even less with discussion about photographic practices. However, the cultural context and its central role in the production of visual signs point to the parallels of these two approaches with semiotic ideas.

Technical Ethos

By using the term "technical ethos" Frank Webster criticizes photographic education and its tendency to concentrate on improving photographers' technical skills at the expense of learning decoding and analyzing the meaning or content in photography. This kind of education gives students the opportunity to learn to produce "correct" photographs without questioning their work, ambitions, or even the medium itself. The education is unsuitable for giving competence in dealing with the meaning of expression, and therefore it strengthens the *status quo* of cultural sign structures. At the same time, Webster exposes two misleading myths about photographers, which have both fostered the tendency towards the *status quo* and promoted the idea that photographs are objective "mirrors" of the world. First, the photographer has been romanticized as (and believed to be) a creative individual who shares something unique with his/her audience. In my perspective, a photographer can better be seen as a subject (i.e. "artist") but as well as an actor in media (the latter determines the former). Second, the camera has been seen as a passive and objective eye-witness of reality. Realistically the camera can be specified simply as a tool and nothing but a tool. After these myths have become blank, it is easy to agree with

Webster that photography is always received in both culturally and historically specific situations.[3]

For Webster, a fruitful approach to present-day photography as a cultural phenomenon is to divide it into the processes of encoding and decoding. Webster characterizes encoding as a photographer's way to "load" a picture with meaning produced by using elements in the cultural sign structure, and decoding as the audience's activity of receiving the meaning in photography. The well-known idea of encoding–decoding gets a new interpretation when Webster claims that the main responsibility for the transformation of the message lies with photographers. If they wish to speak with communicative power, they must be conscious of the constituents of the symbolic meanings of their culture, even while the audience may be unconscious of these meanings.

> "It seems to me crucial that recognizing the role played in communication by culture, we ought to focus our attention upon the constituents of that culture. This is of vital necessity for two reasons. First, because acknowledgement of the importance of culture allows us to recognize the need to query ideas which are not generally reflected upon. ... Second, ... When we recognize culture as wedded to communication we realize that decoding is a process of interpretation in which the viewer selects and reads symbols by way of their cultural knowledge. ... Such a principle points out the need for communicators to study carefully not only their own cultural dispositions but also the orientations of their audiences."[4]

In other words, Webster recognizes the basic elements in the production of visual signs, but in his search for an answer to the "problem of communication" he turns his gaze only in one direction, namely toward photographers. For Webster, the audience, although not a passive crowd, is an "innocently ignorant target" for photographers, and the latter should be well aware of this. For a researcher Webster offers the role to study the cultural unconscious, which he regards as the connecting level between photographers and their audience. This he names "rhetoric of visuality".

Webster's conclusion about the need for the study of rhetoric in

visuality is easy to accept. On the other hand his presentation implicitly suggests that the manipulative capacity of the photographer (or "communicator", as he would put it) in the encoding – decoding process has increased. According to Louis Althusser, for example, this is exactly what has happened; the cultural unconscious has been increasingly used as a method of attracting audiences' attention in media markets without disturbing the prevailing *status quo*.[5] Webster avoids criticism by stressing the importance of ethics and sign production as the primary concerns of education. When speaking about the positive self-reflection of culture, he nevertheless reduces power to hegemony by describing it as a highly uncritical practice which leads to the phenomenon of ethnocentrism. Even though he sees the audience as an active decoding part of the communication process, his idea of ethnocentrism is dangerous. To express this in Michel Foucault's vocabulary, it hides within itself an anatomy of power. This consequence is evident especially when photographers use their professional skill to maintain *status quo* by producing material which audiences take as "standard images".

Towards Rhetoric of Visuality

Cultural visuality or socialization into it as a value or attitude generalization cannot be understood by questioning the quality or goals of photographers' education. On the other hand, when theorizing about visuality, it is not enough just to mention the need for cultural analysis. As Webster says, photography is communication, but to connect intersubjectivity and socialization directly together is reductionism. Both encoding and decoding are based on the activity of an actor. I cannot accept Webster's idea of rhetoric of visuality at this point. Webster in a way forgets the connecting level between the two extremes of the communication process. By this level I mean the photograph with all its properties. These properties cannot be insignificant; on the contrary, they may be purposely hidden or unrecognized, but this does not make the whole phenomenon rhetorically empty or unsuitable for theoretical analysis.

The competence of the audience in receiving visual material (i.e. their ability to be open towards that material) has changed quite

a lot since Theodor Adorno's or Antonio Gramsci's days. People have learned to interact with a new kind of (audio)visual culture. A look or glance that an individual has at visual information, no matter what kind of material he/she is dealing with, already includes contextual knowledge that makes him/her able to locate this information not only in a certain individual memory of history but in a culturally familiar genre as well. In other words, the same situation of receiving is a moment of several potential interpretations. A Finnish art critic and a semiotician, Altti Kuusamo, calls this the "law of the genres". Depending on what genre of visual representation the receiver finds to be relevant at a given moment, he/she becomes sensitive to its meaning structure on a level on which this structure is recognized.

This does not mean "anarchy of the receiver" over the meaning of visual representation. On the contrary, it is the omnipotence of the eye which is concretized every time we find ourselves in a conflict because several different ways of interpretation are available for us and still we know which one to follow. Furthermore, in this momentous conflict, for a whole variety of reasons, we can hardly deny the charm of "misinterpretation" whose presence becomes apparent to us in this multitude of possible interpretations.[6]

Robert Goldman and Stephen Papson have noticed that every new generation of advertising introduces in its signification-process forms of ellipsis based on the abbreviation of encoding rules. They call this tendency "hypersignification". According to Goldman and Papson, nowadays advertisers use deliberate minimalism instead of explicit commodity narrative, and leave the construction of the narrative to the audience. Making sense is now embedded in the code itself, or it may involve the disappearance of the product, or even enigmatic ambiguity, challenging viewers to act as self-conscious semioticians:

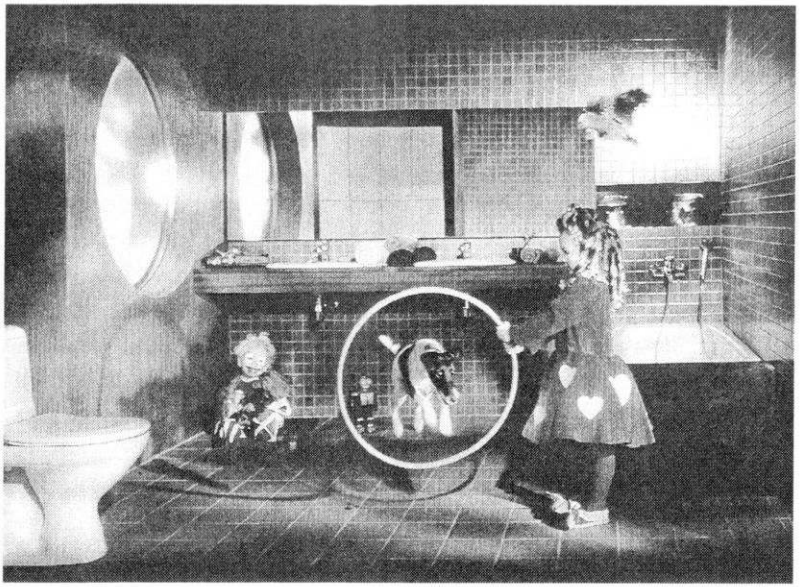
> "We live in a sea of signs in which it is ever more difficult to differentiate one sign from another. Viewers who have a history of media consumption also have a history of negotiating the positioning strategies used by advertisers – this permits advertisers to call on viewers' memories, ... they thus speak to a higher form of media literacy where viewers are asked to ab-

stract and generalize from specific texts. Contemporary culture is turned into a giant mine for intertextual references."[7]

Goldman and Papson deal with the visuality of television advertising. As I already mentioned when introducing Altti Kuusamo's idea of "law of genres", contemporary audience (audiences) can be considered very competent in acting with massmediated visuality. I use the expression "visuality", because advertising cannot be the only "sea of signs" in the media where the audience use their skills of interpretation and construction of meaning. And in this respect, while connected with "hypersignification", Kuusamo's idea can be very perceptive as a principle explaining the relation between the audience and the meaning structure.

I am inclined to use the term rhetoric differently from Webster. Rhetoric is, without doubt, the main concern when we aim to understand the multipotential situation into which a press photographer is led by his/her work. But rhetoric as a theoretical term that we use when attempting to conceptualize sign production leads us, in the first place, to the ontology of photography and to semiotics. Therefore, I would prefer to talk about two different kinds of "gravities". First, the gravity inside the photograph, where the sign structure of visual representation and its means are concretized. This is the area that can be called the rhetoric or rhetorical gravitation of the photograph. Second, all the possibilities and limitations that the photograph meets when published, such as type of publication, association by publication, the way, time and place of publishing, and more, circulation, repetition, volume and duration I call the contextuality or the contextual gravitation of a photograph. Both parts of the gravity are historically and culturally determined.

When rhetorical gravitation can be connected hypothetically to the level of sign structure, the contextual gravity (or a contextual bond between the photograph and the viewer) can be seen as a level of evaluation of the visual data based on the "decoding" process (such as connecting the photograph to a certain type of photography, or forming a continuum or rhythm between photographs in one's memory to be compared with former experiences that one has about visuality stored in another memory). One could also con-



Photography's rhetorical potential has become in some sense more visible not only in advertising but in photographic illustrations on the average.

clude that Kuusamo's definitions operate in the area of contextual gravitation (knowledge about genres), and "hypersignification" is operationalized by the audience in the area of rhetorical gravitation (that is, skills of understanding visual messages and making them complete when needed).

A good example of this evaluation is the spectator's skill in perceiving different genres of photography. New documentarism and advertising have tested the limits of these genres, and some of this has been swallowed by the audience without notice. On the other hand, as soon as someone crosses the "sacred" border too roughly or evidently, the audience responds aggressively (as has happened in the case of Benetton or in the beginning with computer-manipulated photographs). When we approach the unconscious level e.g. in art photography, the confusion of the audience who cannot decide which type of gravity ought to be primary is evident (there is a whole trend of exhibitions of this kind but one of the most famous is Cicciolina's and Jeff Koon's exhibition on pornography). And this happens despite the fact that the audiences of

exhibitions are normally a highly specialized minority of the population as a whole. The separation of these two gravities is naturally a purely theoretical approach of reaching the goal set at the beginning of this article.

The importance of the audience cannot be underestimated. The historicity of photography and the importance of the audience can be described by drawing on Stanley Fish's idea of interpretative communities. According to Fish, both the authoritative intentions and the formal characteristics in a text are subordinate to the reader's presumptions and style of reading. What is more, the intention and characteristics have no existence outside reading and the reader's experience in this situation. Fish denies that texts involve formal activities of interpretation as ready-made models of decoding. He suggests that reading as an experience is based on interpretative strategies, which take the form of models of receiving in perception practices. In the act of interpretation, the reader applies his/her own procedures to the text. Signification does not happen between objectivity and interpretation but between the conscious and the unconscious. For Fish, text is reinterpreted in each reading experience. Interpretative communities are built on priorized strategies which the members of the community follow. Because the strategy is learned, it is under constant reformulation in debates and conflicts.[8] I want to add to Fish's idea of "ready-made" structure that interpretation strategies are, in my opinion, the mediating level between author (here the photographer) and reader (here the audience), and – to connect this to cultural visuality – that debate is a target of contemporary advertising, as Goldman and Papson argue. Fish does not use the idea of the communities of interpretation to the visual representation, and therefore his conclusions must be considered by keeping the perceptional strategies of visuality in mind.

Rhetoric of Photography

So, for one author the significance is in the decoding process, and for another it is in the never-ending interpretation. When speaking about rhetoric of visuality, I place it between these two. The rheto-

ric of photography is embedded in the photograph itself. I do not deny the importance of Webster's and Fish's ideas, but there are certain reservations I would like to make.

First, photography is communication that works mainly in one direction. "Mainly", because there is slow but unmistakable feedback in the markets of visuality, but here this is not a major concern. Second, it is a polysemic way of representation, and should therefore be discussed as a more complex sign system than simply as something that can be sent or received.[9] Third, a photograph is published most often in connection with a text. Thus, to be able to understand the qualities of a photograph it should first be separated from the text (even though this separation is artificial) and then, after the study of the photograph's inner qualities, be re-connected with it and the phenomena as a whole analysed.

To distinguish the uniqueness of rhetoric in visual materials, I find this analytical separation of utmost importance. Without it, we end up making observations about the genres of visuality, and of course, we can point out most of the meaning and its hidden structures (this is hegemonic, that is ideological, these articulate power, etc.), but this ignores rhetorical specifications. Moreover, if the analysis of rhetoric regards the meaning as given, as Webster or Fish suggest, it would lead us into a situation where one or the other of the participating parties would be at the mercy of the other. The process of communication can be divided into encoding and decoding, but when speaking about rhetoric, we need to connect it to a specific place or situation. And that happens in my opinion *in* the photograph and not outside it.

The third approach which has to be included in this discussion is the question of the theory of rhetoric. Chaim Perelman has developed some interesting ideas about the "contemporary" theory of rhetoric.[10] He points out that argumentation is not a formal system and therefore the status of elements that enter the given arguments cannot be fixed. Perelman shows his curiosity for the adherence of the audience to the premises of the arguments.

Perelman has pointed out that argumentation cannot ever be true in itself. Its aim is to make itself reasonable. As a matter of fact, each choice made in this respect shows the possibility of alter-

natives. For Perelman, argumentation always takes its shape according to its audience. "Since the number of arguments is *a priori* indefinite, a choice must inevitably be made, guided by the idea one has of the respective arguments."[11] Perelman tries to make this intuitively evaluable notion precise by giving argumentation two qualities. These are efficacy and validity:

> "Since the efficacy of an argument is relative to the audience, it is impossible to evaluate it above and beyond reference to the audience to which it is presented. On the other hand, validity is relative to a competent audience, most often to the universal audience. The strength of an argument depends upon the adherence of the listeners to the premises of the argumentation; upon the pertinence of the premises; upon the close or distant relationship which they may have with the defended thesis; upon the objection which can be opposed to it; and upon the manner in which they can be refuted."[12]

The rhetorical qualities Perelman mentions – efficacy and validity – can be found in photographic practices as well. In the distinction I made earlier they belong to the area of rhetorical gravitation. And as Perelman notes about political speech, these two qualities are mixed together in it in such a way that they are hard to keep apart. The strength of an argumentation can be understood to be dependent on the activity of the audience. The more reasonable the audience find the connections of the argumentation with their cultural knowledge, memory and beliefs, the easier they can find, as Perelman writes, "the methods of reasoning appropriate to it". In photography, if the audience cannot make conclusions about the genre of visual representation they are facing, their interpretation of it will be ambiguous or they may as well ignore it. In other words, Perelman's idea of adherence is based on the quality of photography I have called contextual gravitation, but the two properties of adherence, efficacy and validity, are qualities of rhetorical gravitation. These ideas can also be applied to visuality. When Perelman concludes that the qualities of argumentation are a gateway to the listener's mind and opinions (adherence), he is describing the same kind of influencing strategies that Webster is suggesting for a good

and responsible photographer.

If photography has to be connected to one semiotic structure, it is metonymy. Without any detailed description, I want to emphasize that photography is cropping and constructing in the name of expression.[13] Therefore it stands, as representation, for something larger within its bounds of parameters. When speaking about symbolic liaison, Perelman comes very close to my subject. He claims that "insofar as a symbol gives presence to what is symbolized it can serve as a figure of rhetoric, such as metonymy".[14] To make it simple, the efficacy of a photograph is its ability to make visual representation in such a strong manner that it is intensive enough to attract expected attention. The rhetorical validity of the photograph means getting its significance received at a certain cultural and historical moment in such a way that the photograph is located in a clear position in medium, genre and debate.[15]

How, then, could we find means of analysis to operationalize the rhetoric of photography? I would like to refer to one more writer concerned with the characteristics of photography. John Tagg puts together very well both the possibilities and the problems of the idea of rhetoric when speaking about photography:

> "This pattern on paper is, in turn, the object of a perception – or reading – in which it is constituted as a meaningful image according to learned schemas. The meaning of the photographic image is built up by an interaction of such schemas or codes, which vary greatly in their degree of schematization. The image is therefore to be seen as a composite of signs, more to be compared with a complex sentence than a single word. Its meanings are multiple, concrete, and most important, constructed. In common also, with other language-like systems, photographs may be exhaustively analysed as projections of a limited number of rhetorical forms in which a society's values and beliefs are naturalized and which may not be dispelled simply by analysis since, following Freud's discussion of desire and censure, we may see rhetorical forms as mock transgressions of notional, simple, underlying propositions which may be rejected but which still provide, through their very rejection, a source of unpunished satisfaction."[16]

For Yuri Lotman, rhetorical structure does not rise straight from the principles of linguistics but from deliberate reinterpretation of rhetorical principles. He developes further Roman Jakobson's idea of semantic trope. For Lotman the semantic tropes are a mechanism of transformation in situations where the sign construction is impossible in one language or code. The trope is a mediating "rhetorical metaphor" between two sign structures which cannot be connected. This semantic turn is not just a shift but a merge where the signification in the rhetorical situation integrates whole.[17]

Because rhetorical organization is produced in semantic tension between the organic structure and the "alien" structure, Lotman argues that it is possible to analyze this organization.[18] When an element of "alien" structure ceases to be equivalent to itself, it changes to a sign and an imitation of itself. Umberto Eco discusses the same metamorphosis of a sign and calls it an "idiolect of aesthetic". Code and message feed one another in close interaction. The receiver compares new semiotic possibilities to the sign system or language as a whole and organizes his/her communicational experience again and again. The aesthetic code can recreate a sign system by widening the consciousness of the code, and the cultural way of discovering the world changes. Because the receiver/spectator does not know the code system that the sender/photographer uses, he compares it to his own aesthetic experience and memory. For Eco, the aesthetic code is therefore a dialectical relation between preciseness and freedom. To open this dialectics, Eco calls for a new rhetorically orientated semiotic approach.[19]

Lotman steers his semiotic considerations in this direction. He uses the concept of replica. According to Lotman, in a "pictorial text" the transformation and multiple replication have a special function. In a text the content–expression relation is evident and conventional. On a poetical level (where the replica belongs) these levels mix to unite as a higher organization than the text. In the area where this multiple replication takes place, the level of conventionality thickens and becomes clearer than the replica was.

I interpret Lotman's formulation and adapt it to photography. A single referent in a photograph is culturally charged exactly in that form in which the cultural practice applies it. Here I refer to my

idea of contextual gravity. The rhetorical qualities that a photograph gives to the receiver in order to challenge him/her to formulate what Lotman calls a multiple replica may be based on contextual facts. But the rhetorical means and intentions present in the same situation must be carried by the photograph itself. And therefore the main interest given to the rhetoric of photography should be aimed at the other part of gravitation I mentioned – the area of rhetorical gravitation. That can be sociological as Webster suggests, but more important than this sociology of rhetoric is, I think, the need to create methods to understand the aspects of a photograph as a sign system. When this level of visuality is familiar to us, we can study the communication as a whole and better understand the idiolectical differences that Eco saw as a basic principle of dialectic relation in visuality.

The image on the page 75 is from Konsepti Oy Advertising Agency's Silver Award winner advertisement in "The Best of Finnish Design and Advertising" competition 1995. Team: AD Nina Katajamäki, Copywriter Kari Eilola, Photographer Nuikki, Project Manager Christer Sundell, Advertiser/IDO Kylpyhuone Timo Lahtinen. Published in HeSa Kuukausiliite n:o 20, October 1st 1994.

Notes and References

[1] Webster Frank (1985), *The New Photography, Responsibility in Visual Communication*, Riverrun Press Inc. New York.

[2] Juri Lotman (1989), *Merkkien maailma, kirjoitelmia semiotiikasta*, SN-Kirjat, Helsinki.

[3] About misleading myth, see Webster, 1985; 18-20, and about status quo e.g., 47-51.

[4] Ibid., 134.

[5] About advertisements and status quo, e.g. Westergaard Torben, Schroeder Kim (1985), *The Language of Advertising*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 89.

[6] In fact, a caricature can be named as "an ancient" example of this. Nowadays the potentiality of several interpretations has spread very wide to the visuality in media as a whole.

[7] Goldman Robert and Stephen Papson: Advertising in The Age of Hyper-signification, *Theory, Culture & Society* (SAGE, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi) Vol 11. (1994) 23-53.

[8] Fish's argumentation has affinities with Derridean theory of discourse and terms conscious/unconscious here are comparable to that. Fish is more pragmatic than Derrida and the idea of total relativism does not therefore include the conception of "interpretative community". See; Lodge David (ed.), *Modern Criticism and Theory*, Longman, London and New York, 1983, 311-329.

[9] Umberto Eco has concluded iconic code to be example of "weak codes" where precice sign structures are hard to find and under a constant transformation. Another definition is between semiotically clear "ratio facilis" and "ratio difficilis" where expression is motivated by "the nature of the content". The latter describes succesfully the challenge that the iconic code puts to analysis.

[10] Perelman Chaim, *The Realm of Rhetoric*, University of Notre Dame Press, London 1982.

[11] Ibid., 139.

[12] Ibid., 140.

[13] Yuri Lotman theorizes about semantic tropes as a mean to switch from a code system to another. A basic division of the tropes is between metaphor, where the relation of a sign to what it stands for is resemblance, i.e. relation in absentia; metonymy where the relation is based on time, position or logic, i.e. relation in praesentia; and synechdoche where a part can stand for the whole and vice versa. A photographic expression uses all of these tropes. But to characterize photograph as a rhetorical entity in all its qualities and to admit its ideological nature, metonymy is the only suitable one. If a photograph is named metaphorical, all that cannot be counted as resemblance have to be left out. Determing a photograph as a synechdoche means not to discover its qualities to abstract.

[14] Perelman, 102.

[15] Victor Burgin has ellaborated a photograhs rhetorical and contextual properties. See "Photography and Art Theory" in *Studio International*, vol. 190, 1975 (In his text Burgin apply structural semiotics which I have left out in this article.)

[16] Tagg John, *The Burden of Representation*, MacMillan, London 1988.

[17] See also footnote 13 in this text.

[18] By "alien structure" Lotman emphasizes a situation where the trope is used for bringing one element from a structure to another which are

principally not connected. A good example of this in visual materials is usage of different materials in the same film, e.g. documentary as a part of drama. The difference and it's effect are not mechanical but they can be subjectively interpreted as "strange" and understood as a strong rhetorical effect. Lotman concludes a very similar idea about interpretation that I have introduced earlier by Altti Kuusamo's "Law of genres".

[19] See, Eco Umberto, *A Theory of Semiotics*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 1976,168-178.

Juha Virkki

Sociality in the Age of Mediascape

The Uses of Media, Control of Distance, and Social Agency

Introduction

Douglas Kellner, in his recent book Media Culture (1995), argues that "the position from which ideology speaks, is that of (usually) white male, Western, middle- or upper-class subject positions, of positions that see other races, classes, groups, and gender as secondary, derivative, inferior, and subservient" (ibid., 61).

This argument is not surprising but rather common knowledge in modern social sciences. I would not have given it a second thought had I not remembered what I had read on the preceding page, where Kellner, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Texas, Austin, and probably of "white male, Western, of middle- or upper-class subject position" himself, writes about his experience, gained in over twenty-five years of teaching: "students and others are not naturally media literate, or critical of their culture, and should be provided with methods and tools of critique to empower them against the manipulative force of existing society and culture" (ibid., 60).

To me, the combination of these two arguments spell out the main problem of critical theory. Kellner criticizes "the position from which ideology speaks" for considering others as subservient, but

acts himself in the same patronizing manner when stating that his students (presumably representing a politically correct combination of social groups of America) do not have the "methods and tools" for controlling their lives in contemporary culture. Kellner uses also very "enlightening" rhetoric when he speaks of things like media literate (reception of media texts as decoding them), methods and tools (for social engineering?), and manipulative force of existing society and culture (individuals as puppets of dominating powers?). In the background one can almost hear the title song of High Noon when the sheriff of Austin enters the community of helpless townspeople to defeat the evil, villainous powers of the culture.

I am not arguing that Kellner's young students have the capabilities for studying popular culture. Nonetheless the framework and rhetoric Kellner uses cannot be the only way to study and understand (media) culture. Rather than adhere to such a view we should be more sensitive to and aware of those crucial (in many cases media-driven) changes in Western cultures and of the experiences of the users of (media) culture in everyday life.

This article sketches out a theory of the uses of the media and sociality. I am trying to reach this goal by discussing recent media studies, pointing out some of the shortcomings of media sociology, and offering some starting points for a sociology of the media and its uses in the postmodern condition. My final aim is to link together the various uses of the media and sociality, as discussed for example by Michel Maffesoli. I will also propose a postmodern social agency for media sociology, or a sociology of the uses of media.

I will begin by describing my theoretical standpoints. The first standpoint is my relation to critical theory. Whilst in social theory the status of orthodox critical theory (in Adorno & Horkheimer style) has been widely challenged, regarding media sociology it still stands firm. Having read Douglas Kellner's *Media Culture* I was surprised just how firm – although the author calls for "a cultural studies that is critical, multicultural, and multiperspectival", he seems to simply redress orthodox critical theory by bringing in ethnicity, race, gender and sexuality. Despite his rhetoric on the "new", he does

not acknowledge any major changes in people's media relations from the golden days of the Frankfurt School to the present.

My second standpoint is a relatively moderate view of postmodernity, postmodernism(s) and postmodern, which I understand as a definition of the contemporary cultural situation, its cultural practices, and a descriptive term for its appearances. My view of postmodernity resembles much Steven Connor's (1989, 184) definition: "... the postmodern condition is not a set of symptoms that are simply present in a body of sociological and textual evidence, but a complex effect of the relationship between social practice and the theory that organizes, interprets and legitimates its forms." I can also easily live with a short definition of Zygmunt Bauman (1992, 187) as he describes postmodernity "as modernity conscious of its true nature – modernity for itself", and Mike Featherstone's (1991, viii) argument that "the reality itself has not changed so much as the way we perceive and understand it". Thus, it is possible to argue that the social changes which have moulded postmodernity, and the theories of postmodernity, are interrelated and interactive, and thus cannot be separated. For me, this means a decisive split with critical theory which does not acknowledge (or at least does not show any signs of) this kind of interdependence.

My third standpoint concerns the position of theory. I agree with Anthony Giddens's argument about the 'circulatory nature' of sociological discourse: "The discourse of sociology and the concepts, theories, and findings of the other social sciences continually 'circulate in and out' of what it is that they are about. In so doing they reflexively restructure their subject matter, which itself has learned to think sociologically." (Giddens 1992, 43.) I also agree with Veijo Hietala (1993) that ideology theory must be accompanied by a discussion on the ideology of theories. By this I mean that theories, especially in social science and even poststructuralist theories, are all ideological (i.e. not "objective" or "value-free"), and so the theorist must be aware and self-reflexive about this.[1]

All theories are also contextual, rooted in time and space. I do not deny the importance of Kellner's view of contextuality as expressed in his argument "texts must be read in terms of actual struggles" (Kellner 1995, 103), but again I tend to lean towards the other

end of the production–reception scale. By this I mean that most theories do not 'travel well' in time or space: something that may sound valid in Texas in the 1960s may not pass a critical examination in Central Finland in the 1990s. Herein lies a problem for media sociology especially since much of its theoretical basis is self-assumed. Orthodox critical theory may still sound relevant in sharply divided societies like the United States (see e.g. Lash 1994, 121-135), but the case may well be quite different in the Scandinavian social democracies, whereby the media-structure is totally different, social divisions and culture very different, and therefore the uses of media and their effects quite different as well.

My fourth standpoint is related to what Bruno Latour (1988) calls 'the politics of explanation'. To my mind many writers of critical theory are guilty of what Latour calls deductive 'powerful explanations', policy of 'accusation' and 'acting at a distance'. The majority of critical theorists seem to produce deductive explanations based on their theories, finding 'capitalism' guilty of oppression, and speaking for the oppressed *ex cathedra*. As for myself I hope to introduce descriptions of a possible state of things; I cannot regard capitalism as an acting subject that has a centre, single policy or a certain ideology (if making profit does not amount to one), and I feel that I have neither the wisdom nor the mandate to speak on behalf of others on their experiences[2]. Theorists' 'speaking for the others' has led to a situation in cultural studies where, according to Grossberg (1992, 75), "one would never guess that the various fractions of the middle and upper classes have a popular culture of their own".

This leads me to think that in the disguise of an emancipatory mission a lot of critical sociology acts in a hierarchical manner and from an institutionalized position of 'knowing better'.[3] Bruno Latour argues that this means "abandoning the cherished idea (cherished in academic circles) that other people, before or elsewhere or down there below, believe in things and behave without consciousness. 'Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.'" (Latour 1988, 170).

The Uses of Media – between Opression and Revolution

One of the most fundamental changes in everyday life during the last few decades has been the rapid expansion of the media. Although people actively use media perhaps just a couple of hours a day, they are nonetheless exposed to it for most of that day. This phenomenon is symptomatic of the so-called developed societies and is regarded as a main feature of the postmodern experience. For example, Douglas Kellner (1995, 17) speaks about media culture as the dominant culture today that has "replaced the forms of high culture as the center of cultural attention and impact for large numbers of people".[4] He also argues that media culture has become the dominant force for socialization "with media images and celebrities replacing families, schools, and churches as arbiters of taste, value, and thought" (ibid.). In this sense it can be argued that we are living in the age of 'mediascape' in which the media have become 'a significant other' (G.H. Mead) for the dialogical human mind (see e.g. Taylor 1991, 33).

Although I do not agree with all of his conclusions, Ian H. Angus (1989, 340) expresses this point very clearly:

> "What is new about TV is its form, the technological alteration of perpetual experience, and its influence on the whole media environment ... which includes also other media such as film, speech, computers, and so on. This starting point recognizes the significance of media in constituting social reality (not merely representing it), a recognition that is particularly important in our media-saturated era, though it is not confined to it."

This changing role of the media from representing social reality to constituting it has several social implications. The media's role in our everyday life not only influences our daily routines and practices but also affects our social life in many ways. These changes, again, have an impact on the ways we use the media.

Douglas Kellner (1995, 4) argues that "cultural studies cannot be done without social theory, that we need to contextualize, interpret, and analyze the nature and effects of media culture". It is easy

to agree on this, although unfortunately Kellner's reductive idea of social theory remains insensitive to our everyday experiences and practices[5]. I contend that studying the media and its uses is crucial for social theory today. As Jim Collins (1992, 262) argues:

> "If, following Marshal Berman, we might say that Modernism was a period in which all that was solid melted into air, the current period is defined by a different dynamic, in which all that is aired eventually turns solid, the transitory coming back around as the monumental with a decidedly different cultural status and cultural resonance. Contemporary popular narratives mark the beginning of the next phase, when new forms of textuality emerge to absorb the impact of these changes, and in the process turn them into new forms of entertainment."

Collins' argument is in harmony with Jean-Francois Lyotard's statement, made over two deaceds ago, about the changing importance of texts. Christa Bürger (1992, 73-4) summarizes it as follows:

> "What is important in a text is not its meaning, what it is trying to say, but what it does and causes to be done. What it does: the affective charge it contains and communicates; what it causes to be done: the transformation of these potential energies into something else – other texts, but also paintings, photos, film sequences, political actions, decisions, inspirations to love, refusals to obey, economic initiatives."

This does not further our cause much. But if we try to add to this construction an appropriate idea of social agency, affected by the "beginning of the next phase", we might get somewhere. Thus, what might be the social agency for the times of "all that is aired turning solid", the times of the texts with "affective charge", and for the times of the transformation of these potential energies?

One answer is offered by Andrew Tudor (1995), who in a recent article has traced two approaches (effects research and text analysis) in media research. He studies their "typical, though often implicit" epistemological positions and their distinctive social ontologies and suggests a new conception of social agency to overcome the boundaries. Tudor ends up observing that both effects

research and text analysis act within formally similar ontological systems, based on "very general dualistic divisions: individual and society, structure and action, text and reader and the like" (ibid., 100). To overcome these dualisms he proposes a general, if modest, goal: "to locate texts and their associated social practices in a framework which conceives the production and reproduction of social activities as a conjoint consequence of both agency and structure" (ibid., 103.) However Tudor falls short in this respect: he merely ends up reinventing the old British culturalists' phrase of people "making the best of their lives in the conditions they cannot command".

Douglas Kellner's view on media culture is largely a sort of master-slave configuration; at the same time he criticizes the likes of John Fiske and Lawrence Grossberg – both of whom can be seen as kinds of revolutionaries in media sociology – of fetishizing the resistance. Kellner (1995, 38) argues that "there is a tendency in cultural studies to celebrate resistance per se without distinguishing between types and forms of resistance (a similar problem resides with indiscriminate celebration of audience pleasure in certain reception studies)". For Kellner structure seems to determine agency, and at least to me, this appears to be inevitable in critical theory. Kellner still intentionally overlooks the fact that everything cannot be reduced to oppressive power relations, especially when dealing with the media and popular culture. Grossberg (1992, 75-9) has instead argued that popular culture is always more than ideological; why should all of our everyday practices that do not act inside the dominant code automatically be classified as resistance or revolutionary? John Fiske (1989) has set forth a parallel idea of everyday resistance as a combination of resistance and evasion. Film scholar Timothy Corrigan (1991, 202) has also argued that "... images are not power except as they find and as they appropriate a fortuitous place in a network of social and aesthetic contingencies...". So, instead of reading the media as a reflection of oppressive power relations and regarding everyday uses of the media as a pure struggle against capitalist oppression, we have to turn to the everyday world around us and try to construct from this point of view a valid theory of the society around and in us.

Michel Maffesoli – Image, Affect and Collective Experience

The French sociologist Michel Maffesoli[6] has one thing in common with critical theorists like Douglas Kellner: they agree that the image and the media are crucial phenomena when trying to understand present-day societies. But unlike Kellner, whose main concerns are the representations and contents of the media, Maffesoli argues that the information mediated by television is not of vital importance; once again the focus is not on what television is but what it does. What is important is the viewing of television capable of uniting millions of people in a simultaneous experience (Sulkunen 1995, 9). As Maffesoli (1995, 43) argues: "The image is consumed collectively here and now. It acts as a collective force, it enables us to observe the world, not to represent it." Thus Maffesoli turns the traditional idea of the media and the image upside down. In this context the hierarchical characteristics of the image seem to disappear and the oppressive power relations suddenly appear unimportant. What is left is collectivity or "the pure social", as Maffesoli might say.

While critical social theories are hierarchical and relatively fixed or goal-oriented by nature, Maffesoli's perception of society is basically horizontal and transitory. It can be argued that in critical theory, at least in its orthodox form, media and its images act as identity-constructing vehicles that have a certain difference-making power, and that the identities, once found, are relatively stable or reducible to ontological certainties. By contrast Maffesoli argues that in postmodernity "media discourse does not have predetermined intentions but it expresses every time, from day to day experienced passions, affects, and feelings. ... In other words, it is a question of an aesthetic style that favors common experience and thus self-identification in a medium – in the media – that express this kind of common emotion. In this way, postmodernity is detached from the logic of representation and shifts towards the logic of perception" (ibid., 95). This means that Maffesoli does not regard the media as a hierarchical or oppressive power centre or an Althusserian state apparatus. Rather he argues that the media acts

as a mirror reflecting society back to itself, or even as a totem to dance around.

In this sense Maffesoli's conception of society (or the social) comes close to Lawrence Grossberg's (1992) thesis of 'the affective economy' of popular culture and Erkki Karvonen's (1995) argument that cultural products are communication about ourselves to ourselves. In contemporary society (and social theory) the media is no longer a site of power struggle or a ideological state apparatus; its role is to reflect collective experience, emotions and affects. The media and its images act as a catalyst for the sociality that emerges only to disappear again. Maffesoli (ibid., 176) sees this as "a slow shift away from a theoretical, abstract and distant ideal of democracy towards an everyday ideal of a community of in-common lived image, style and form. In the sociality that emerges through these conditions there is something that is unheard of, even frightening, something that leaves the social engineering and sociometry, captured by clichés and confirmed orthodox categories, speechless".

Identity and Social Agency

Maffesoli's arguments, as seducing as they are, do not leave very much at hand if one is trying to construct a social agency for the postmodern mediascape. Actually Maffesoli no longer speaks about a stable identity, or even changing identities. Instead he speaks about roles and role-games. Maffesoli does not accept the argument about "the loss of moral sense, the multitude of love relationships, the ideological unanticipation and unchangefulness or uncontinuity of professional actions. In all these cases the question is simply about a change of role, that I have called a set of 'successive sincerities'" (ibid., 92). This leads us to the question of authenticity. The basic assumption of what I call 'modern sociology' is that identity is in a way real and concrete: it is there to be found. And for Althusserians and the like the false consciousness of the 'interpellated' subjects needs to be replaced by 'the right' or the authentic identity. Much of this legacy is inherited by several approaches of critical cultural studies and sociology. The main problem here is that the authentic-

ity is defined as an objective state of things. At this point, once again Maffesoli turns the picture upside down when arguing that in this surrendering to 'successive sincerities' "the authenticity at stake is only temporary, and when it is saturated a new role is adopted to which the commitment is equally authentic" (ibid., 92). Thus subjectivity is communicative by nature and authenticity is defined by a person her/himself. It cannot be evaluated from the outside, but only as a subjective experience.

How could one construct a social agency out of this? Philip Wexler (1990) has outlined what citizenship might be 'in the semiotic society'[7]. Wexler asks a difficult question: How can we talk about social belonging or solidarity when society is not being produced, but only simulated, when the social itself is seen as an ideology of the modern era? Wexler, who obviously has taken Baudrillard's theses as descriptive, not as normative, offers a quite traditional and obvious explanation ("A- and B-citizens" on the grounds of the uses of media), although he comes up with couple of interesting observations that may be useful in constructing a social agency in the age of mediascape. Wexler's class conception is nevertheless quite rigid and taken as given, and his conclusions of television's passivizing effects are simplifying and moralistic ("Neither [new middle class or 'other' class] has any longer the motivation of libidinal 'desire' to act."), as e.g. Maffesoli (1995) and Lull (1994) have demonstrated in their studies[8].

Wexler (1990, 166) argues that "in present societies the regulation of consumption and production of demand have become so systemically important that their production system – advertising and the image – is transvalued from a derivative to primary condition of societal maintenance". Thus the media, the image, and their uses all form the basis of sociality. Wexler claims that in this situation "socialization is desocialized, deregulated, and... self-constructive practices are reprivatized". Wexler constructs two separate classes on the basis of their adaptation to semiotic society. Typical of the so-called new middle class is that it "collects and rationalizes communicative artifacts – 'signs' – in narrative self-construction", while the 'other' class (youth, poor and unemployed people, minorities, domestically laboring women and the aged) "lives from

television, which it repays by surrendering the capacity for attention it produces". Thus for Wexler television works as a class practice, enlivening for one class and deadening for the other. (ibid, 171-173.) It is interesting to note that this kind of semiotic society only seems to be an updated replica of the old industrial society and its relations. However the 'first class' does not have to own the image-production facilities, rather only know how to use them, and the 'other' class is not deprived of its labor but only its capability to act as a class (forming a pathological 'idle class'), which may be relevant for neo-marxists but not for actual living people themselves.

The basic error for Wexler as well as Kellner is a very 'modernist' one: they see the media and their uses only as a rational or cognitive practice, in the light of ideology, and they confuse it with the other social systems of present-day societies. As Anthony Giddens (1991, 4-5) argues:

> "A universe of social activity in which electronic media have a central and constitutive role, nevertheless, is not one of 'hyperreality', in Baudrillard's sense. Such an idea confuses the pervasive impact of mediated experience with the internal referentiality of the social systems of modernity – the fact that these systems become largely autonomous and determined by their own constitutive influences."

At the same time most critical theorists fail to see other sides of the media and popular culture. The emancipatory undercurrent of modern sociology in a way disrespects people's own everyday experiences and regards them as incompetent to evaluate the media and their uses. The social agency, embedded in this kind of theorizing, is one that is predetermined and fails to link the uses of media to the actual social contexts within which it takes place. But "people are engaged with forms of popular culture because, in some way and form, they are entertaining; they provide a certain measure of enjoyment and pleasure. Of course, such relationships might also produce ideological effects, either directly or indirectly... but these are almost never the source of relationship, nor the plane of their primary effectivity" (Grossberg 1992, 74). Thus, people do not use media in order to be 'interpellated', nor do they watch television to

fight the abstract powers that be. Especially in the case of television these kinds of conspiracy theories or 'ideological distortions' are apparent, as Giaccardi's (1995, 124) notion of "TV fostering... the rehabilitation and renewed interest in the expressive, emotive skills" points out.

Leisure of Pleasure – 'The Twilight Zone' for Modern Sociology

The media and its uses, occurring in leisure time and including as difficult a phenomenon as pleasure, have formed a somewhat problematic agenda for modern sociology. In a way, most sociologists have read media texts within a context that some cultural critics call "requirement culture", as closed texts that have to be decoded for self-construction and social power play. In this sense the uses of media become confused with other social actions and regarded as functioning in the same logic as they do. This is apparent especially in the postmodern condition and in the case of postmodern phenomena. A sharp critic of radical sociology (a term I interpret mainly referring to the critical theory), Tugrul Ilter (1994), accuses radical sociology for colonizing and domesticating postmodernism:

> "Postmodernism as modernism's other is thus a domesticated other that subjects alterity to the mastery of the modern self who always-already knows or will have already known, for example, that postmodern as its other is nihilist, relativist, and obscure... The othering of postmodern is the means by which the modern is constructed as self-same and uncontaminated by the postmodern. That is how one comes to speak of the postmodern as a 'dark jungleland' out there that awaits Enlightenment, rather than as something in here and in 'us'." (ibid., 54-56.)

Ilter's words can be applied to critical theorists' attitude towards the media and its uses in the postmodern condition: by colonizing everyday uses of the media with rigid and reductive conceptions of class, gender, etc., critical theory actually places itself as a revolutionary vanguard with the emancipatory mission against the dragon

of what some cultural theorists call 'convenience culture' (see e.g. Karvonen 1991). But does the 'dark jungleland' of the media and popular culture and the ignorant masses enjoying them really need (or deserve) the theory for spoiling what they consider important and pleasurable in their everyday lives? Michel Maffesoli has a similar view on what he calls "sticking in seriousness, reality principle, theoretical and ideological dogmatism, economic or political supremacy". He argues that social life escapes in many ways the 'should-be' orders and that "the more the importance of work is emphasized, the more free thought is restricted, ... the more a utilitarian idea of life is supported, the more, as a replay, sociality, which is based on imaginary, existential light-heartedness, aspiration for hedonism, shared joy of life, appearance and the play of forms, is highlighted" (Maffesoli 1995, 69).

Lawrence Grossberg (1992) has introduced a theory of 'affective economy of popular culture' to the cultural studies, and Maffesoli (1995) extends the concept of affect as describing sociality in the postmodern condition. In this sense both Grossberg and Maffesoli challenge 'the sociology as we know it' (e.g. the critical theory as committed to the primacy of political-economic structures) and argue that "social change, whether historical revolutions or the rippling tide of contemporary cultural mutations is incomprehensible without a command of the emotional forces at work in the crowds of our daily lives" (Shields 1991, 3). Furthermore, if we are trying to construct a social agency for the postmodern condition, these 'emotional forces' are the new construction components we must take into consideration.

Lawrence Grossberg (1988) has examined youth, rock music and political conservatism in the United States. He argues that traditional explanations of the lived reality, social identities and cultural representations are not inevitably valid in present times. According to Grossberg: "It is not that young people do not live the ideological values of their parents; rather, they find it impossible to represent their mood – their own affective relationship to the world – in those terms, and increasingly, to invest themselves seriously in such values. Postmodernity demands that one lives schizophrenically, trying, on the one hand, to live the inherited meanings, and

on the other hand, recognizing the inability of such meanings to respond to one's own affective experiences" (ibid., 148). If we accept Grossberg's point of view as a valid description of the postmodern experience, the questions posed by critical theory become problematic. While "meaning and affect... have broken apart" (ibid.), everyday practices, e.g. uses of the media, become self-reflexive or ironical by nature. Practices of this kind challenge the critical theorists' (or should I say Kellnerian) understanding of political activism and come close to what John Fiske describes a combination of resistance and evasion in everyday life (c.f. Fiske 1989, 1-12).

Grossberg argues that "the diverse formations of youth relate to culture differently: youth refuses to look behind the meanings to be deciphered. Rather, youth inserts cultural texts into its public and private lives in complex ways" (ibid., 139). For me, this means that many everyday practices which appear to the critical theorists as ideological or conservative actually do not have that kind of impact or meaning for their users; the practices may be described as basically affective.[9] Grossberg admits the affect is "perhaps the most difficult plane of human life to define and describe", but he argues that "affect is closely tied to what we often describe as the 'feeling' of life... Such 'feeling' is a socially constructed domain of cultural effects". According to Grossberg, affect "operates across all of our senses and experiences, all the domains of effects which construct daily life. Affect is what gives 'color', 'tone' or 'texture' to the lived". (Grossberg 1992, 80-81.) Embracing Grossberg's view to everyday uses of the media means a profound shift of focus: a one-sidedly cognitivist view must give way to a more aesthetic approach, as Scott Lash (1994) has also argued.

As Grossberg (ibid., 140) states: "This new set of strategies empowers these youthful cultural subjects in new way; their power lies in their ability to appropriate any text, to undermine the distinction between production and consumption and, in this way, to deny the power of ideology and of the commodity itself." Latour's ironical remark can be changed to a new form: "Father, do not forgive them, for they know what they do" – and they are not staging a revolution but constant and unexpected guerrilla raids inside the commodity culture.

Tim Corrigan, a film theorist discussing American "movies and culture after Vietnam", delivers a parallel view on the uses of media:

> "The contemporary predicament through which movies address their audiences may mean that we often only find illegible and cultish configurations which make traditional categories for understanding and responding to movies a disturbing and difficult fit... Because of this, watching the multitude of television and movie images today requires, it seems to me, an unusual mobility across the interminable digressions and distractions that condition those viewings. Viewing now means continually reinventing oneself and one's spatial and social location, appropriating and inhabiting, sometimes simultaneously, the most disparate of images, form cartoons to documentaries, from commercials to epics." (Corrigan 1991, 229.)

Corrigan argues that this means "we can practically act out and socially reassemble different... cultural media as part of a social and often critically active relation with those images" and as a consequence "a cultural shift... is quite apparent: if movies and other images suffuse cultural life, *viewers* in their daily variety, not the medium, *have become the message*" (ibid., italics – JV). The kind of viewers Corrigan describes are hardly any more 'couch potatoes' than Grossberg's youth is self-evidently politically conservative. While in much of 'the sociology as we know it' the subjectivity is predetermined and only to be found in the present cultural condition the subjectivity, which might well be too strong a concept, must be continuously constructed and this happens inside the affective economy. When Maffesoli (1993, 9) writes that "rather than dominating the world, rather than wishing to transform it or to change it... one attempts to integrate oneself with it by contemplation", he is describing the spirit that may be condensed into 'a Grossbergian phrase': it is not so that nothing matters, it is that it does not matter what matters. This means that the familiar political agendas (on which critical theory depends) have become irrelevant for those people whose subjectivities should be based on them, and still there exists things that do matter in everyday life.

Controlling the Distance — between Society and Sociality

Scott Lash (1988) has constructed two ideal-types of sensibilities on the basis of their modes of signification. He disagrees with Baudrillardian views on the renunciation of signification in postmodernity (see e.g. Baudrillard 1988) and claims that "postmodern cultural forms do indeed signify, only that they signify differently" (Lash 1988, 313). He argues that modernist culture signifies in a 'largely' discursive way, while postmodernist signification is importantly 'figural' (see Table).

Table. 'Regimes of signification' according to Lash (1988).

the modernist signification	the postmodernist signification
discursive	figural
words over images	visuality over literary
formal qualities of cultural objects	devaluating formalisms and juxtaposing signifiers of everyday life
a rationalist view of culture	contesting rationalist and/or didactic view of culture
the meanings of cultural texts	the doings of cultural texts
sensibility of the ego	extension of primary process (Freud) into the cultural realm
distancing the spectator from the cultural object	operating through the spectator's immersion and the relatively unmediated investment of desire in the cultural object

Lash suggests that postmodern signification is a de-differentiated 'regime of signification' but his examples, e.g. postmodernist paintings "showing again desire on the canvas" (ibid., 313), may be challenged. Even so his ideas are similar with Grossberg's and Maffesoli's ideas of postmodern experience of everyday life. But for me this kind of binary opposition seems a little bit strange. If we consider postmodernity in Bauman's words as "as modernity conscious of its true nature – modernity for itself", we must add a self-reflexive component to this figure. If the postmodern view shows modernity "in true light", this gives way to a new kind of strategies for survival "in the beginning of the next phase". This self-reflexivity, when dealing with the media and its uses in everyday life, materializes as the control of distance. My suggestion is that when we are studying the social in the age of mediascape and the ways in which people use the media, the crucial question is how we understand the continuous moving between interpretation and immersion as a constructive component of the social agency.

Wexler's (1990) ideas of 'the first class' and 'the other class' in the semiotic society is based on a similar view. I agree with Wexler when he argues that "the semiotic society of course carries with it elements of the 'old', modern society" (ibid., 166), but I disagree with his ideas of "a dichotomously bifurcating class difference" (ibid., 171), at least if it is based on such a rigid class conception. I think that Wexler fails to see the actual everyday uses of the media which may be more various than just empowering for the privileged and disempowering for the underprivileged. Wexler takes an important step when implicitly accepting the media's role as constitutive in social relations but he does not see the social meanings of the media beyond class construction.

Michael Schudson's idea of culture "not just a set of ideas imposed but a set of ideas and symbols available for use" turns out to be useful here. Different classes may have different practices that may still be empowering in different ways. Schudson argues that "individuals select their meanings they need for particular purposes and occasions from the limited but nonetheless varied cultural menu a given society provides. In this view, culture is a resource for social action more than a structure to limit social action." (Schudson

1989, 155.) For example, film scholar Jeffrey Sconce (1993) has demonstrated that traditional Freudian theories and readings of popular horror films totally differ from the "highly self-reflexive and comic meditation on the spectator relations" of the actual viewers. Erkki Karvonen (1995) has shown how the fans of a popular Finnish comedy series Kummeli use the slogans and the characters of the series in their everyday resistance against authority figures, or nullifying the institutionalized power relations. In this sense a text may look plain stupid for a social critic, but can actually work in an empowering way in everyday life.

A parallel kind of view on the present culture is apparent in John Fiske's argument of distance being "a key marker of difference between high and low culture, between the meanings, practices, and pleasures characteristic of empowered and disempowered social formations" (Fiske 1992, 154). I agree with Fiske that distance may well be a key marker, if not necessarily between the pleasures of empowered and disempowered social formations, but instead in outlining two overlapping spheres of social life: the society, in which 'modern structures' still rule and in which distance may be operationalized for gaining some benefits, and the sociality, by which I mean the phenomena that Michel Maffesoli and Lawrence Grossberg describe. If the logic and the survival strategy for society is the need for constant interpretation, the logic of the sociality may be described as immersion. It can be argued that sociality, understood in this sense, is an "action without a specific goal or value, but it still indicates the utmost social creativity" (Maffesoli 1995, 57).

I suggest that the ability to control the distance to the media and its texts/images as a self-reflexive practice forms an important component of social agency in the postmodern condition. The capacity for shifting from immersive collective experiences of postmodern social bonding to interpretive practices "in collecting and rationalizing communicative artifacts in narrative self-construction" (Wexler) may prove to be an indispensable virtue. The life-sphere which many postmodernists call sociality (as the opposite of society) and which Lash calls "the postmodernist regime of signification", is all the time gaining ground in present social formations,

and this "aesthetization of everyday life" (Mike Featherstone) means "a shift from the 'activistic' understanding of the world towards a different, more delightful understanding, and this happens through the image, following from the meaning gained by the form" (Maffesoli 1995, 43). However I would not dismiss the role of activism in the present-day society – activism and media go together nicely, as shown by the case of Greenpeace –, just challenge the traditional mass- and class-based understanding of politics.

Conclusion

In this article I have sketched, albeit in a rather fragmentary way, some possible perspectives concerning the uses of media and sociality in the postmodern condition. The basic parameters around which these viewpoints revolve are the following: in the postmodern condition the social role of media has changed from representative to constitutive. And as a result of this shift, instead of asking what media are we must try to answer the questions of what media do. This means that we must theorize about the uses of media at the everyday level, accept that activity as relevant and valuable regardless of whether it is rational or non-rational, and come up with theories that challenge the dogmatic understanding of the uses of media.

To me, much of the critical theory appear as an out-dated standpoint for describing everyday uses of the media. I think that the relevance of the concept of ideology should be rejustified. For example Christopher Williams (1994) has argued that "the concept of ideology has become a way of avoiding discussing the social" and that "the concept of ideology should thus be replaced by whichever more concrete term is appropriate to the field under discussion. In philosophical contexts we should speak of ideas or beliefs; in linguistic ones of convention, style and diction; and in historical and political ones of social conventions and ideas of the social itself." (ibid., 286-7) Although Williams's reformulations seem somewhat vague, the basic idea is worth considering. Omitting the concept of ideology does not mean rejecting social criticism, but it allows one to redirect the criticism towards more concrete and more contex-

tual power formations than abstract and overpowering capitalism.

I plead guilty of subjectivity in the social agency matter (c.f. Tudor 1995) but not in the same sense as ethnographers. I suggest that we need a broader and better conceptualized view of the multiple roles of the media in different societies than pure ethnography can deliver, but we should not lose sight of the actual practices around us. In this sense, however, the structure-determined idea of society implied in the 'objective' view (e.g. critical theory) seems to underestimate people's own everyday experiences.

I am not denying that, in favourable conditions in the network of aesthetic and social contingencies, the media can act as an ideological apparatus, nor do I disagree with views on subversive uses of the media. But, as Gerhard Schulze (1993) argues, we live partly in a world of economic and rational mode of action (that may be called society) and partly in a world that consists of the rationality of experience (that is, sociality). This is why we should not underestimate the uses of media that seem to escape the comprehension of 'the sociology as we know it'.

This life-sphere of 'the affective economy' and sociality appears to me to require more description and understanding than normative explanations with "a meta-language" (c.f. Latour 1988, 174). This kind of understanding, theoretical but still emphasizing everyday uses and practices, also calls in question the oppressive power relations in sociality. I would suggest that, with certain limitations, the life-sphere of sociality may be regarded as a possibility for a more equal and egalitarian layer of social life. In principle most people have access to it, and in this non-mechanical and non-rational sociality the difference-making factors seem to lose their oppressive power. Thus, postmodern sociality, appearing on the surface of the social world, cannot be analyzed with concepts that are made for studying the structures of (modern) society .[10]

The abandonment of a rigid conception of subjectivity, adopting multiple views of actual everyday practices, stressing the affective charge and the transformation of the media's potential energies into something else, and the possibility for "critique of the universal by the particular" (c.f. Lash 1994, 136) are viewpoints that need to be taken seriously in social theory if social theory wants

to be taken seriously in the postmodern condition.

The following poetic words of Umberto Eco (1987, 150) nicely summarize the point:

> "Once upon a time there were the mass media, and they were wicked, of course, and there was a guilty party. Then there were the virtuous voices that accused the criminals... Well, it's all over. We have to start again from the beginning, asking one another what's going on."

Notes

[1] As for myself, 'the emancipatory task' of social sciences has become somewhat troublesome. I am not sure about the reason, but it may be that I find the saviour's role for 'the lesser ones' as an admirable but not a realist one.

[2] This does not mean that I do not have an obligation to act in ways that increase their opportunities and power to speak for themselves.

[3] This reminds me of an episode in Hanif Kureishi's novel *The Black Album* (1995) where a frustrated Marxist history professor sobs that he cannot say that the British working class has betrayed Marxism (although he admits to think that way all the time): "It's not true, it's not true! They have b-b-betrayed themselves!" (ibid., 244.)

[4] An art historian friend of mine asked me what these forms of high culture might be. My guess is that it is not a relevant question in American middle class culture, but it is a relevant one, for example, in Finland where "the forms of high culture" have not been at the center of cultural attention for large numbers of people but very few ones.

[5] Gerhard Schulze told me in an interview that "we should rethink our relations to the classics of sociology. We quote them as universal truth-tellers. This is not right. Instead of that we should act like the classics, follow their example in studying society." (HS 21.6.1995)

[6] Most of my Maffesoli-citations come from the Finnish translation of a French book (*La Contemplation du monde*, 1993) that has not been translated into English. So, because of "double-translation", the concepts I use in English may be disputed.

[7] I interpret 'the semiotic society' as the same state of things that Kellner calls 'media culture' and I, in this paper, 'mediascape'.

[8] Maffesoli (1995, 25) argues: "The ideal of communality can be found... in the multiple appearances of solidarity and charity, which are often

left unanalyzed. They can be more or less impressive, they can take place through media or, on the contrary, take effect silently in everyday life." Lull has introduced various examples of the power of television "to raise the masses to the barricades", e.g. the Los Angeles riots and events in China before the Tiananmen Square massacre.

[9] One example of this, outside uses of the media, might be the new popularity of the traditional church wedding in Finland. My interpretation is that this is not a sign of the rise of conservative values but a clear indication of an emerging culture of affective economy.

[10] Maffesoli (1995, 59) argues that the profundity of the postmodern sociality must be searched on the surface of matters.

References

Angus, Ian H. (1989) Media Beyond Representation. In Ian Angus & Sut Jhally (eds.) *Cultural Politics in Contemporary America*. New York & London: Routledge.

Baudrillard, Jean (1988) *Selected Writings*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt (1992) *Intimations of Postmodernity*. London & New York: Routledge.

Bürger, Christa (1992) Modernity as postmodernity: Jean-Francois Lyotard. In Scott Lash & Jonathan Friedman (eds.) *Modernity and Identity*. Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell.

Collins, Jim (1992) Genericity in the Nineties: Eclectic Irony and the New Sincerity. In Jim Collins, Hilary Radner & Ava Preacher Collins (eds.) *Film Theory Goes to the Movies*. New York & London: Routledge.

Connor, Steven (1989) *Postmodernist Culture. An Introduction to Theories of the Contemporary*. Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell.

Corrigan, Timothy (1991) *A Cinema without Walls. Movies and Culture after Vietnam*. London: Routledge.

Eco, Umberto (1987) The Multiplication of the Media. In Umberto Eco: *Travels in Hyperreality*. London: Picador.

Featherstone, Mike (1991) *Consumer Culture & Postmodernism*. London, Newbury Park & New Delhi: Sage.

Fiske, John (1989) *Reading the Popular*. London & New York: Unwin Hyman.

Fiske, John (1992) Cultural Studies and the Culture of Everyday Life. In Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson & Paula Treichler (eds.) *Cultural Studies*. New York & London: Routledge.

Giaccardi, Chiara (1995) Television Advertising and the Representation

of Social Reality: A Comparative Study. *Theory, Culture & Society* 1/ 1995, pp. 109-131.

Giddens, Anthony (1991) *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddens, Anthony (1992) *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Grossberg, Lawrence (1988) Rockin' with Reagan or the Mainstreaming of Postmodernity. *Cultural Critique*, Fall 1988, pp. 123-49.

Grossberg, Lawrence (1992) *We Gotta Get Out of This Place. Popular Conservativism and Postmodern Culture*. New York & London: Routledge.

Hietala, Veijo (1993) Ideologian teoriasta teorian ideologiaan. *Lähikuva* 1/1993, pp. 29-36. (From the theory of ideology to the ideology of theory.)

HS 21.6.1995. Haluamme että maailma olisi kuin oma äitimme. Interview of Gerhard Schulze in *Helsingin Sanomat* 21.6.1995, p. C6. ("We want the world to be like our own mother").

Ilter, Tugrul (1994) The Unassimilable Otherness of the "Post" of Post-modern and the Radicality of Radical Sociology. *Critical Sociology* 2/ 1994, pp. 51-80.

Karvonen, Erkki (1991) Populaarikulttuuri elämänhallinnan tuottajana. *Tiedotustutkimus* 1/1991, pp. 13-21. (Popular Culture as A Producer of Life Conduct.)

Karvonen, Erkki (1995) Ajattele positiivisesti – ota Kummeli! *Tiedotus-tutkimus* 1/1995, pp. 4-14. (How viewers used a comic sketch TV programme to gain control of their life and make it more comfortable.)

Kellner, Douglas (1995) *Media Culture. Cultural studies, identity and politics between the modern and the postmodern*. London & New York: Routledge.

Kureishi, Hanif (1995) *The Black Album*. London & Boston: Faber.

Lash, Scott (1988) Discourse or Figure? Postmodernism as a 'Regime of Signification'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 2-3/1988, pp. 311-36.

Lash, Scott (1994) Reflexivity and its Doubles: Structure, Aesthetics, Community. In Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens & Scott Lash: *Reflexive Modernization*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Latour, Bruno (1988) The Politics of Explanation: an Alternative. In Steve Woolgar (ed.) *Knowledge and Reflexivity. New Frontiers in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Bristol: Sage.

Lull, James (1994) *Media, Communication, Culture. A Critical Approach*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Maffesoli, Michel (1993) The Social Ambiance. *Current Sociology* 2/1993, pp. 7-16.
Maffesoli, Michel (1995) *Maailman mieli. Yhteisöllisen tyylin muodoista.* Tampere: Gaudeamus. (Orig. title La contemplation du monde. Figures du style communautaire, 1993.)
Schudson, Michael (1989) How culture works. Perspectives from media studies on the efficacy of symbols. *Theory and Society* 18, pp. 153-180.
Schulze, Gerhard (1993) *Erlebnisgesellschaft.* Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag.
Sconce, Jeffrey (1992) Spectacles of Death: Identification, Reflexivity, and Contemporary Horror. In Jim Collins, Hilary Radner & Ava Preacher Collins (eds.) *Film Theory Goes to the Movies.* New York & London: Routledge.
Shields, Rob (1991) Introduction to 'The Ethic of Aesthetics'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 1/1991, pp. 1-5.
Sulkunen, Pekka (1995) Esipuhe. In Maffesoli, Michel (1995) *Maailman mieli. Yhteisöllisen tyylin muodoista.* Tampere: Gaudeamus. (A Foreword)
Taylor, Charles (1991) *The Malaise of Modernity.* Concord: Anansi.
Tudor, Andrew (1995) Culture, Mass Communication and Social Agency. *Theory, Culture & Society* 2/1995, pp. 81-107.
Wexler, Philip (1990) Citizenship in the Semiotic Society. In Bryan S. Turner (ed.) *Theories of Modernity and Postmodernity.* London etc.: Sage.
Williams, Christopher (1994) After the classic, the classical and ideology: the differences of realism. *Screen* 3/1994, pp. 275-292.

III Private and Public in Religious Life-conduct

Marjo Kaartinen

Humanism Colliding with Humanism

Public and Private Spheres in the English Religious Debate on Monasticism from c. 1510 to 1540

Introduction

The English Reformation debate is probably not one of the most obvious sources to find discussion on public and private spheres. Sometimes the less obvious becomes quite self-evident when examined more closely. Therefore, it is the purpose of this article to study how public and private spheres were perceived in the English religious debate before and during the Reformation period. As a starting point, it is illuminating to define what *public* and *private* meant in the early sixteenth century England. Interestingly, *the Middle English Dictionary* gives as its first meaning of private a secret or a secret act. Other meanings are a divine secret, sacred mystery and a revelation, hiding and secrecy, solitude and privacy, private affairs and lastly, genitals. These definitions show that the meanings have somewhat changed; and it must be added that the sixteenth century writers did not necessarily equate solitude and privacy with the term *private*.

Public meant something open to general observation, pertaining to public affairs, or common. The indications of *public* clearly have not changed as much as *private*, but *common* was used more

often than *public*. Because of these changes in the indications of these terms, I shall replace *private* with *contemplative* and *public* with *active*. In religious debate, contemplative and active came to mean public and private in a modern sense.

The English religious debate began a few years earlier than the Henrician Reformation which dates to the year 1529 when the Reformation Parliament assembled. The major religious outcome of this Parliament was the rejection of papal power in England in 1534 and the dissolution of the monasteries. Scholars have asserted that the dissolution of the monasteries was an economic project which was focused on enriching the nearly bankrupt Crown. The Act of the Dissolution of the Lesser Monasteries (1536) was explained by Henry VIII on the grounds of the bad behavior of monks and nuns in small religious houses. The religious were sent to larger houses of their orders. The Act of Dissolving the Greater Monasteries (1539) was made justifiable by the King by stating that all the monasteries were corrupt and therefore not needed.

In the following, public and private aspects of monasticism are my theme. The debate, which never actually concentrated on the religious houses reveals, however, many attitudes towards them. The sources of the debate studied here are the vernacular pamphlets of the opponents of the Reformation and the Protestants. Obviously, Sir Thomas More, one of the major writers of the early sixteenth century, is a visible figure in the discussion. Thomas More was a conservative and one of the major opponents of the King's Reformation: he died defending the Pope as a head of the Church of England. Most writings which I discuss here, however, were written by humanist reformers of whom some were Lutherans. Their points of view are quite interesting when contrasted to More's ideas on monasticism. Here we can see humanism colliding with humanism.

Monasteries in Late Medieval England

The main objective of monastic life was devotion to God. Monasticism had its roots in a few hermits joining together and sharing their ascetic life. I do not see this as private life but ex-

tremely public, even exposed, in front of the eyes of God and other believers. Monastic life was built on rules and schedules. In theory, individual monks or nuns were not allowed to possess anything, and everything they had was shared with others. If someone wealthy entered a monastery he was expected to reject his worldly things to collegial use. Monastic life meant living in God's love, charity or *caritas*, and prayer; fasting and abstinence were the central themes of daily monastic life. Caritas could be achieved by costant vigilance and contemplation.[1]

Regardless of their secluded nature in contemplation, monasteries had many obligations toward the world outside the cloisters. In that sense they were very public institutions. Even the strictest of the orders (eg. the carthusians) were open to the world in several ways. Among them, education was one of the most prominent. Seclusion did not necessarily mean secrecy. The limited openness of the religious houses gave them spiritual, economic, social, and educational power over the nearby villages and village dwellers. In the following these public aspects of monasticism will be discussed. One indication of the spiritual importance of the monasteries for the medieval religious culture were miracles which were often, one way or another, transmitted through the monasteries and by the religious communities.[2] Pastoral care was mainly the duty of the secular clergy, but an important part of this everyday work was done by monks and especially friars who were popular as confessors.[3] Life after death was the main employer of the members of the religious orders. Masses for souls were probably the most prominent form of interdependency between the secular people and the monasteries.[4]

In a feudal society the economic and social aspects of monasticism were often linked. This can be seen in the distribution of land: religious houses owned land with feudal rights over the peasants. Large monasteries were bound to supply knights: for example, the mighty Peterborough Abbey had an obligation to support 40 knights in the royal fortress of Norwich.[5] The houses were very industrious and thus had substantial employers. They ran workshops, saltworks, fisheries, dye works, and mills. They often had large kitchen gardens and fields and sold parts of their crops in markets and fairs.[6]

Monasteries had many obligations and duties to people in need. Large houses had organized their charitable work carefully. They had almoners, who distributed alms and dealt out left-over food from the refectory table. Subalmoner visited the sick to help them both economically and spiritually. Gervase Rosser, however, has stated that these activities suffered in the Late Middle Ages when monasteries turned inwards and further away from the world.[7]

Religious houses were also responsible for the maintenance of hospitals. Many large houses ran hospitals for laity as well. One of the most famous of these was the still existing St Bartholomew's Hospital in London which was under the direction of St Bartholomew's Priory in Smithfield. It took care of pregnant women, and orphans were taken care of by the house until he or she was seven years old. St Bartholomew's also nursed epileptics, mental patients, and those with eye and ear problems.[8] In addition to the sick, monasteries had to take care of the needs of numerous travelers, visitors and pilgrims.[9]

Finally, the educational activities of the religious houses must be returned to. In many parts of the country they were the only institutions to offer any form of tuition. Monastic shools in England taught both male and female students, and indeed, for girls monasteries were the only possibility for education outside their homes. They would be taught reading and writing but usually not foreign languages, and usually not even nuns mastered Latin.[10]

To sum up, the importance of religious houses in the society and culture of the Middle Ages was manifold and immense. Almost in all aspects and phases of life they could and would be present, from birth to life after death. The public and active aspect of the religious houses was clearly present in the extramural side of the house.

Humanists and Vita Activa

During the Reformation English humanists were eager to reject the idea of privatization of the self. This becomes evident when the debate on the worth of monasticism is studied. Before attempting to do that, we should take a look at the history of *vita activa*. The

English writers emphasized the importance of collective thinking and the secondary importance of individuality. For this, their model was the ancient moral philosophy. It was necessary to educate people to benefit from the *common weal*. A child was an empty vessel and born disobedient, thus the essence of education was the subordination of the child. A human being fit for society was tied to social hierarchy.

For many humanists, active life, or *vita activa*, was the only acceptable form of everyday life. They found this idea from Cicero who had written that it was honorable to submit oneself to the challenges of the world. This was contradictory to the Medieval ideal of contemplative life, *vita contemplativa*, in which God was best served if worldly pleasures were completely rejected. Among others, St Augustine preferred the rejection of the mundane to the sinful life of the majority. For him, monasteries were like a sweet scent to God. In the contemplative ideal life people would show their greatness of mind by dedicating their whole lives to the service of God. Contrary to this, humanists chose to insist that living in the world was the greatest possible good and pleased God the most. The humanist emphasis on active life had, naturally, its roots in the Italian city states where it was politically important to value everyday life.

A prominent example of the sixteenth century humanist thinking and writing comes from Erasmus of Rotterdam who was one of the most influential contemporary examples for humanists. His *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* was first printed in England in 1533.[11] *Enchiridion* pointed out that monks were prone to superstition, pride, and hypocrisy. Erasmus accepted the ancient monastic ideal of retrieving from the world, but he abhorred the present monks' rejection of God. He wrote that the wealth collected by the religious houses had corrupted them. It seems that on the one hand Erasmus approved of virtuous monastics. On the other hand, it was his opinion that people living outside the cloisters were no less holy. He asked: "Could not the cities be like monasteries?"[12] In this comment we can see a clear allusion to the ideal of *vita activa*. Why should anyone enter a monastery and choose the narrow and difficult path to salvation if ordinary everyday life in itself could be a

monastery and fulfill the religious needs of everyone, Erasmus seems to ask. Similarly, one of the most prominent Italian humanists, Lorenzo Valla, had earlier demanded that the word religious, *religiosi*, should refer to anyone who wanted to live according the God's rules within or without the monastery walls.[13]

The comments of the critics of monasticism in the English Reformation polemics show clear signs of the impact of the new humanistic ideal. I will return to this dichotomy later on.

Reformation Debate: Public and Private Spheres Reorganized

The question of anticlericalism or antimonasticism in the Late Medieval literary tradition is interesting but, surprisingly, not thoroughly investigated.[14] John Wycliff's and lollards' opinions in general have been widely accepted as anticlerical but the negative attitudes of the English in a wider perspective have not yet been convincingly proved. It has been stated that the anticlerical feelings were mainly generated by economical reasons: taxes paid to Rome were unpopular. Alister McGrath has written that the economic depression brought negative attitudes towards the clerical estate, but only towards priests, not the Church as an institution.[15] Actually, this assumption is quite logical, because disastrous harvests provoked envy of the apparent wealth of the clergy. Peasants also suffered greatly as the amount of arable land diminished when fields were turned into pastures. In fact, even Thomas More criticized abbots for this in his *Utopia*.[16]

The tradition of scorning the members of religious orders was old but it can be seen as a part of medieval literary tradition in which everyone, not just monastics, was ridiculed. A famous example is Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* which portrayed the religious negatively: monks and friars were lewd, proud, deceitful, gluttonous, hypocritical, and drunkards. Chaucer clearly indicated that the proper place for monks was inside their monastery and that the friars should have amended their ways. He did not regard the public aspects of their lives highly, but regardless of the severity of his criticism, it must be remembered that the main pur-

pose of Chaucer was to amuse his readers, not necessarily to mock the religious. Also the famous vernacular religious poem *Piers the Ploughman* by William Langland satirized the monks. In Langland's opinion, monks and nuns were guilty of the deadly sin of hatred.

Two of the quite rare allusions to the privacy of the monasteries meaning *secretive* come from *Peres the Ploughmans Crede* and from a poem *Cokaygne* in which the monks and nuns lived in the middle of great wealth and in the sin of *luxuria*. Ordinary people did not necessarily know what the monasteries looked like inside, and it was easy to invent stories about them and their wealth. In *Cokaygne* they were surrounded by pilasters of crystal, green lapis, and red coral. Emeralds, onyx, and amethysts shone everywhere; there was much light because of glass windows and it was multiplied by the huge amount of crystal.[17] In *Peres the Ploughmans Crede* Dominican friars lived in the abundance of gold, alabaster, marble, precious stones, and glass. Their chapter house was said to have looked like a church or a house of Parliament.[18] Splendor was not regarded suitable for the humble orders.

In 1510 Edmund Dudley's famous treatise *The Tree of Commonwealth* emphasized, quite interestingly, the importance of the clergy as the "Lanternes of Lighte" to the people who wandered in darkness. According to Dudley, members of the clerical estate should live in a proper manner: hospitality was especially stressed, and they should also perform the acts of charity and plentifully give alms. Church buildings and their estates were to be kept in good condition. This would help save England from a threatening catastrophe.[19] Dudley's demands were pointed to the public oriented activities of the secular and regular clergy. In this context, it seems that he was not interested in the devotional aspects of their lives.

At the same time with Dudley's sermon suggesting the above mentioned publicly oriented demands John Colet[20] preached the importance of the clergy for the maintenance of Englishmen's morals. Clergy had to live according to God's rules as good examples for others.

Not all writers agreed with Dudley, however. Several treatises written in the 1510s stressed the importance of the inward oriented life of contemplation. One of the most prominent of these writers

was John Skelton, a poet and a teacher in the court of Henry VII. Skelton despised the greed and ambition of the clergy. He blamed the monks for loitering on market places and nuns for changing their veils for fashionable head-dresses and for turning into prostitutes.[21] He wrote:

> The money for their masses
> Spent among wanton lasses;
> The *Diriges* are forgotten;
> Their founders lie there rotten,
> But where their soules dwell,
> Therewith I will not mell.[22]

The above mentioned critics of the religious orders did not oppose the contemplative ideal. In fact, the contemplative and active lifestyles could still be combined in a "medieval" manner which was presented in *Scala perfectionis*. It listed three types of contemplative life: firstly, knowing God and studying his Word which was meant for the educated and the clergy; secondly, living in the love of God without a profound understanding of spiritual matters which was fitting for those who led an active life; and thirdly, perfect knowledge of God and living in his charity which required complete absorbtion in spiritual matters and was, therefore, suitable only for the cloistered.[23] This division indicates that contemplative life was possible for everyone. But for some, monastic calling was still very special. A Brigittine treatise *The Dyetary of Ghostly Helthe* guided nuns and monks in their devotion: it was important to remember one's pilgrimages, to value time, to think about God's presence, to protect one's mind and body from evil, to exercise spiritually, and to be obedient and patient.[24]The privacy of a monk's cell was a paradise:

> "So it is sure to a Relygyows man to continewe & abyde in his cloystre and in his cell... For ther regnyth peace in the Cell / and without is awaye of batell & stryf. And therfore as Ierome saith he that desirethe Cryste / let hym seke nothinge ellys in this worlde / but let his Cell be to hym as paradyce fulfylled with swetnes of holy scripture / and that use ofte as for delycis / and reioyce in the stodye of them. ...drynke and slepe / but kepe

styll thy cell / ledith a monke to his ordre / and so lytyl and lytyll he retournyd agayn to the holy workys of perfeccyon."[25]

Sir Thomas More was one of the most rigorous opponents of protestants. He had a warm and a close relationship with Carthusians whose order was among the most honored of the religious orders. More lived with the London Carthusians or in the immediate vicinity of their house from 1501 to 1504, probably even to 1505. More's biographer Nicholas Harpsfield wrote in 1551 that More had sought to find out whether he would be able to choose a monastic profession. According to Harpsfield, this test resulted in More's decision to return to the world and active life.[26] It is quite probable that More's close relationship with the Carthusians and his admiration for their vocation had a strong impact on his views on society. For example, his island of Utopia in many ways resembles a monastery.

More found monastic and contemplative devotion admirable. His letter to an unknown monk reveals this clearly. In it More scorned monks who did not live according to the rules and ideals; in his opinion, a holy man could not find time to read heretical books, as his letter's receiver had done. Entering a convent or a monastery a monk gave up all the worries of the world. Therefore, monks should renounce the world so completely that they would not even read letters sent to them by their lay friends. Reading those messages from the world would have been like looking back on the Sodom they had voluntarily rejected.[27]

Thomas More's *Supplication of Souls* was written against Simon Fish who had accused friars for receiving such abundance of alms that real beggars starved.[28] More strongly disagreed and wrote that were Fish's views true, the world would have been turned upside down. Of this collapse More found terrifying examples in Germany. He described his apocalyptic visions in *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies*:

"For there shall ye se nowe the godly monasteryes destroyed / the placis burned vp / the relygyous people put out and sent to seke theyr lyuynge / or in many cytyes the placys yet standynge / wyth more dispyte to god than yf they were burned vp to ashes."[29]

More had a simple solution to the problem of unruly living of the religious: the rules should be made a little laxer: "For better it is to haue an easy rule wel kept, than a strayte rule broken withoute correction".[30] It can be assumed that this reveals More's inclination to value monastic life as such. For him monks could well take part in some aspects of public life. In his opinion, contemplation and a slightly easier rules were not contradictory.

William Tyndale was among the first writers in England who consciously attacked the Church and the various institutions of the papal Church. In *The Practyse of Prelates* Tyndale discussed the history of the Church in a manner which echoes Erasmus. According to Tyndale, different religious orders had claimed power for themselves after the collapse of the power of bishops and priests. Tyndale found it important to tell his readers that in the past righteous monks had lived in abstinence. They had been allowed to eat only once a day, only butter, cheese, eggs, fruit, vegetables and other cheap foodstuffs. The monks had tried to support themselves in various ways, for example by copying manuscripts. Their holiness engendered their destruction. When the laity realized their excellence, they made monks their teachers and granted them great areas of land. It was to be later distributed to the poor which was a promise the monks never fulfilled. In Tyndale's opinion, this was the reason for the decadence of the monastic orders. All this wealth made the monks covetous.[31]

In 1536, when Thomas More, along with many others, was already executed, the Act of the Dissolution of the Lesser Monasteries naturally brought about many writings which attacked monasticism. From the point of view of the public and private spheres these texts are interesting even though the greatest friends of the religious houses were dead.

According to the humanist Thomas Starkey, monasteries were founded because people were afraid of earthly vices and so fled to solitude. In the course of time these recluses formed larger groups which feared God's disfavor. According to Starkey, this was why there were so many monasteries in the Christendom and also so many almost deserted cities. In his opinion, decreasing the amount of religious houses would not lead to disaster. In fact, it is quite

possible that it was Starkey who first mentioned in print that all the religious houses could be suppressed. He reported that there were some people who thought that all symbols of the Pope's power should be abolished because he had no power left in England. Of course, religious houses were significant symbols of the papal world.

Quite interestingly, Starkey also defended monasticism. He wrote that people who condemned religious orders did not appreciate Christ's teaching nor the Early Church. He referred to Matthew (Chapter 3) who wrote about the solitary life of St John the Baptist. He also mentioned that in Matthew 19 it was declared that not everyone was suitable for marriage. What Starkey really disapproved of was the lifestyles of the "fatte monkes" of his time. What he valued was the ideal monastic life in which everything profane was rejected. Medieval monasticism in itself, in Starkey's opinion, was recommendable. He admitted that from the monks had spread "to al the worlde the lyght of our religion...". Even though Starkey did not oppose dissolving the religious houses, he thought that there should be some solitary places for elderly people to spend the last days of their lives praying, meditating, and reading holy scriptures. In his opinion, all this would only be for God's glory.[32] Much of his ideas are present in his statement: "...that ouermuch regard of pryuate wele, plesure and profyt, ys the manyfest destructyon of al gud, publyke, and iuste commyn pollycy."[33] According to Starkey everything public was for the enhancement of good, everything private for the opposite.

Interestingly, Starkey referred to the humanist ideal of *vita activa* when blaming monks for fleeing from the worries of the world:

> "And forbycause the thyng ys of so grete hardnes and dyffyculty, few you schal fynd in al Holy Scrypture, wych wel dyd vse thys wordly prosperyte; for the wych purpos, as I thynke, many men of gret wysdome and vertue flye from hyt, settyng themselfe in relygyouse housys, ther quetly to serue God and kepe theyr myndys vpryght wyth les jopardy... How be hyt, me semyth, they dow lyke to fereful schypmen, wych, for drede of stormys and trowblus sees, kepe themselfe in the haven, and dare not commyt themselfys to the dangerouse tempestys of the same."[34]

The same ideal was also referred to by Thomas Becon in 1543. He wondered what kind of a person would send his children into monasteries to live there idly, piggishly and irreligiously in the middle of delicious food which was bound to provoke the youngsters into vicious living. In Becon's opinion, it was better to let children live among the laity and acquire a decent profession which would profit the whole *common weal*.[35] Hugh Latimer, on the other hand, had accused the monks for their active life. He wrote that they did not preach but lived in fancy manors and focused on luxurious life and state politics.[36]

Conclusion

Monasteries were an important part of Late Medieval society. They were truly public institutions; their social role was crucial to the wellbeing of (especially) the poor. Even their religious services were partly meant for the laity; while seeking his own salvation, a monk was obliged to take care of others' souls as well. The religious debate of the first half of the sixteenth century was ambiguous and revealed some deep wounds. Many writers stressed that the religious should concentrate on the wellbeing of people, be the lanterns of light, while others thought that members of the religious orders should retrieve completely from the world and concentrate on serving only God. It was typical of the humanists to stress the ideal of *vita activa* and refuse the religious any special value in the eyes of God. Many of them, however, wanted the religious orders to continue and serve God in their special manner. The greatest ambiguity in the discussion was suggested by the Reformation pamphleteers (especially Starkey) who seems not to have been able to decide whether the members of the religious orders were to live public-mindedly or privately or whether they should return to the world completely.

Notes

[1] For more on this tradition, see Gwyn, Aubrey: *The English Austin Friars in the Time of Wyclif.* Oxford University Press: London 1940, 4-5.

[2] Thomas, Keith: *Religion and the Decline of Magic. Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England.* Penguin Books: Harmondsworth (1971) 1973, 31. See also Ward, Benedicta: *Miracles and the Medieval Mind. Theory, Record and Event 1000-1215.* Scolar Press: London 1982, passim.

[3] Duggan, Lawrence G.: Fear and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation. – *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte. Archive for Reformation History.* Jahrgang 75, 1984, 153-175.

[4] Carpenter, Christine: The Religion of the Gentry of Fifteenth-Century England. – *England in the Fifteenth Century. Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium.* Ed. David Williams. Boydell Press: Woodbridge 1987, 53-74; Keiser, George R.: St Jerome and the Brigittines: Visions of the Afterlife in Fifteenth-Century England. – *England in the Fifteenth Century. Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium.* Ed. by David Williams. Boydell Press: Woodbridge 1987, 143-152; McDannell, Colleen & Lang, Bernhard: *Heaven. A History.* Yale University Press: New Haven (1988) 1990, 124-142; Camporesi, Piero: *The Fear of Hell. Images of Damnation and Salvation in Early Modern Europe.* Translated by Lucinda Byatt. First published in 1987 as 'La Casa dell'Eternità'. Polity Press. Cambridge 1990, 49.

[5] Lawrence, C.H.: *Medieval Monasticism. Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages.* Longman: London 1984, 114-117.

[6] Savine, Alexander: English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution. *Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History.* Ed. by Paul Vinogradoff. Clarendon Press: Oxford 1909, 101-130; Dunning, Robert W.: The Last Days of Cleeve Abbey. – *The Church in Pre-Reformation England. Essays in Honour of F.R.H. Du Boulay.* Ed. by Caroline M. Barron and Christopher Harper-Bill. The Boydell Press: Woodbridge 1985, 58-67. Swanson, R.N.: *Church and Society in Late Medieval England.* Basil Blackwell: Oxford 1989, 86; Burton, Janet: *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000-1300.* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1994, 235-248.

[7] Rosser, Gervase: *Medieval Westminster 1200-1540.* Oxford University Press: Oxford 1989, 298-300, 310.

[8] *Regularis Concordia 1953*, 64; Rubin, Stanley: *Medieval English Medicine.* David & Charles Newton Abbot: London 1974, 172-174, 180, 186; Siraisi, Nancy G.: *Medieval & Early Renaissance Medicine. An Introducton to Knowledge and Practice.* The University of Chicago Press: Chicago 1990, 25, 38-39.

[9] *Regularis Concordia 1953*, 62; Heal, Felicity: *Hospitality in Early Modern*

England. Clarendon Press: Oxford 1990, 223, 225, 227, 228-241; Bennett, Judith M.: Conviviality and Charity in Medieval and Early Modern England. – *Past and Present*. No. 134, 1992, 19-41; Febvre, Lucien: *The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth-Century. The Religion of Rabelais*. Le Problème de l'incroyance au XVI[e] siècle: la religion de Rabelais. (1942) Translated by Beatrice Gottlieb. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass. 1982, 339.

[10] Gwyn 1940, 26; McGrath, Alister: *The Intellectual Origins of the European Reformation*. Basil Blackwell: Oxford 1987, 10; Keen, Maurice: *English Society in the Later Middle Ages*. Allen Lane: Harmondsworth 1990, 265; Grendler, Paul F.: *Schooling in Renaissance Italy. Literature and Learning 1300-1600*. The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London (1989) 1991, 7-8, 44. 96-100; Walker, Greg: *Plays of Persuasion. Drama and Politics at the Court of Henry VIII*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1991, 6-7. 131.

[11] The text was highly anti-papal which makes its late publication in England an act of propaganda for the cause of Henry VIII.

[12] Erasmus: *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*. An English Version. Ed. by Anne M. O'Donnell. Early English Text Society Original Series 282. Oxford 1981, 20.

[13] Oberman, Heiko Augustinus: *The Dawn of the Reformation. Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought*. T. & T. Clark: Edinburgh 1986, 32.

[14] The most recent and comprehensive collection of studies on anticlericalism in Early Modern Europe is Peter A. Dykema and Heiko A. Oberman (eds): *Anticlericalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*. Leiden-New York-Köln: E.J. Brill 1993.

[15] McGrath 1987, 11. – Catholic historical writing has defended the Church and insisted that the English were not anticlerical before a handful of protestants put that idea into their minds. A classic of this genre is Gasquet, Francis Aidan: *The Eve of the Reformation. Studies in the Religious Life and Thought of the English People in the Period Preceding the Rejection of the Roman Jurisdiction by Henry VIII*. John C. Nimmo: London 1900, 114-154.

[16] More: *Utopia* 1992, 26-27.

[17] Cokaygne. British Library (BL), Harley MS 913, f. 3-6.

[18] *Peres the Ploughmans Crede in Specimens of English Literature. From the "Ploughman's Crede" to the "Shepheardes Calender" A.D. 1394-A.D. 1579*. With Introduction, notes and glossarial index by Walter W. Skeat. Oxford University Press: Oxford 1930, 2-3.

[19] Dudley, Edmund: *The Tree of Commonwealth.* Ed. by D.M. Brodie. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1948, 25, 26, 33, 43.

[20] The exact timing of the sermon has caused discussion; Harper-Bill has concluded that the year was 1512. See Harper-Bill, Christopher: Dean Colet's Convocation Sermon and the Pre-Reformation Church in England. – *History. The Journal of Historical Association.* Vol. 73, No. 238, 1988, 181-210. – Christopher Haigh, on the other hand, has written that the correct year was 1510. See Haigh, Christopher: *English Reformations. Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors.* Clarendon Press: Oxford 1993, 279, n. 9.

[21] Colin Clout in: *The Complete Poems of John Skelton.* Edited by Philip Henderson. J.M. Dent and Sons: London and Toronto 1948, 252-253, 256-258, 259, 261-161.

[22] Colin Clout (*The Complete Poems of John Skelton* 1948, 262-263).

[23] Scala perfectionis. Hereafter foloweth the chapyters of this present volume of Walter Hylton named in latyn (Scala perfectionis) englysshed the ladder of perfeccyon whiche volume is deuyded in two partyes. s.a., no page numbering; chapters 1.4.-1.8.

[24] *The Dyetary of Ghostly Helthe. Here begynneth a deuoute tretyse named the Dyetary of ghostly helthe.* London 1521, passim.

[25] T*he Dyetary of Ghostly Helthe 1521*, f. E1-2.

[26] Harpsfield, Nicholas: *The Life and Death of Sir Thomas Moore, Knight, Somtymes Lord High Chancellor of England, written in the tyme of Queene Marie.* Edited by Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock and R.W. Chambers. The Early English Text Society. Original series 186. London 1932, 17-18.

[27] More: Letter to a monk in: More, Thomas: In Defense of Humanism. Letter to Martin Dorp, Letter to the University of Oxford, Letter to Edward Lee, Letter to a Monk with a New Text and Translation of Historia Richardi Tertii. *The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More.. Vol. 15.* Ed by Daniel Kinney. Yale University Press: New Haven and London 1986, 201, 263, 265.

[28] Fish, Simon: *S Supplicacyon in: Four Supplications. 1529-1553 A.D.* A Supplicacyon for the Beggers by Simon Fish. A Supplicacion to our moste Soveraigne Lorde Kynge Henry the Eyght. (1544 A.D.) A Supplication of the Poore Commons. (1546 A.D.) The Decaye of England by the great multitude of shepe. (1550-3 A.D.). Edited by J. Meadows Cowper. Early English text Society. Extra Series, 13. London 1871, reprinted 1891, 1905. Millwood, New York 1973, 1-2.

[29] More, Thomas: A Dialogue Concerning Heresies. *The Yale Edition of*

the Complete Works of St. Thomas More. Vol 6, part 1. Ed. by Thomas M.C. Lawler, Germain Marc'Hadour and Richard Marius. Yale University Press. New Haven and London 1981, 370.

[30] More: *A Treatise concernynge the diuision betwene the spiritualtie and temporaltie*, 246.

[31] Tyndale, William: *The practyse of Prelates. Whether the Kinges grace maye be separated from hys quene because she was his brothers wyfe.* Marborch 1530, f. D5.

[32] Starkey, Thomas: *An Exhortation to the people, instructing theym to Unitie and obedience*. London s.a., 74-76.

[33] Starkey, Thomas: *A Dialogue between Pole and Lupset.* Ed. by T.F. Mayer. Camden Fourth Series vol 37. London 1989, 65.

[34] Starkey: *Dialogue* 1989, 42-43.

[35] Becon, Thomas: *The Early Works of Thomas Becon. Being the Treatises Published by Him in the Reign of King Henry VIII.* Edited by John Ayre. The Parker Society. Cambridge 1843, 180.

[36] Cricco, Patricia: Hugh Latimer and Witness. – *The Sixteenth Century Journal*. Vol. X, No. 1, 1979, 21-34; O'Day, Rosemary: Hugh Latimer: Prophet of the Kingdom. – *Historical Research. The Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*. Vol. LXV, No. 158, 1992, 258-276.

Kari Palonen

How to Turn God into an Ally?

The Rhetoric of Life-conduct in Max Weber's 'Protestant ethic'

The 'rhetorical turn' is a figure which also shapes the study of political thought today. The expression "X and rhetoric" is a common topos in the literature. However, this wave of rhetoric also leads to a situation whereby the unity of rhetoric has been more or less dissolved. To speak of rhetoric today needs a specification of the aspects discussed as well as an explicitation of the perspectives used.

'Weber and rhetoric' would have been an unthinkable topos for the sociologistic Weber-scholarship of the past decades. These studies tended to view Weber as a paradigm representing a 'rationalist' who abhorred 'empty' or 'mere' rhetoric. The recent Weberology has rightly 'de-sociologized' his *œuvre* and accentuated the Nietzschean aspects of his thought. The 'rhetorical reading' of Weber is a further step away from the textbook-Weber still present in sociology, public administration, and to a lesser extent, political science.

Max Weber himself was a virtuoso rhetorician, mainly of the dissociative type. *Politik als Beruf* (1919) is a provocative defence of the ideal type of politician standing before a suspect student audience whilst simultaneously addressing the powerless politicians of contemporary Germany. But Weber also studied rhetoric himself even in the narrow Perelmanian sense of an argumentation

theory (cf. Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1958). The *locus classicus* of this research is his study on the Protestant ethic.

Perhaps Weber himself understood the rhetorical character of his own research in so far as he changed the vocabulary and often used *Ethos* instead of *Ethik* in the 1920 Edition. (I have discussed the use of Ethos-vocabulary in *Politik als Beruf* in Palonen 1994). Neither in *Die protestantische Ethik* nor *Politik als Beruf* Weber is concerned with a normative ethic but with the practical significance of an ethos. This is noted by Klaus Lichtblau and Johannes Weiß in their preface (p. XV) to a new Edition of *Die protestantische Ethik* in which they systematically note the differences between the Editions of 1904-1905 and 1920. Lichtblau and Weiß emphasize that Weber was not discussing the 'dogmatic content' but the 'practical-psychological impact' (*Wirkung*) of the Puritan conception of work as a *Beruf* (ibid.). I consider this formula to be an expression of the presence of a rhetorical dimension in Weber's work.

As a background for Weber s rhetorical analysis we need his central concept of *Lebensführung*, or the life-conduct as it is translated by Lawrence Scaff (1989). Wilhelm Hennis (1987), Scaff and others have recently re-actualized the 'how to live?' question. It is an open, existential question finally to be decided by everyone her/himself although the contingency of this decision is limited and controlled by diverse restraints such as norms or rules.

If politics is understood as "dealing with the contingent event" à la Pocock (1975, 156), the problem of *Lebensführung* appears as a special Weberian version of micro-politics, concerning one's chances in life-conduct. This figure is a Weberian speciality related to his strange combination of a modern concept of freedom which is both private and political, and neither negative nor positive liberty in the sense of the current dichotomy.

Die protestantische Ethik can be read as a study on the micro-politics of the radical Protestant s life-conduct. Weber discusses the rhetorical mode of argumentation, by which the worldly life-conduct was linked to the question of salvation of the soul.

The Reformation as an Opening and Closure of Contingency

Weber's rhetorical analysis deals with two interlinked situations in the post-Reformation life-conduct. The first one is: how were new life-chances created by the Reformation rhetorically closed from within? However, Weber's main concern is the life-conduct among those Protestants who answered this question by accepting the doctrine of predestination. How did they create chances for action where none seemed to exist? By which rhetorical means did they turn the extreme submission before God into a doctrine of self-affirmation in worldly affairs?

Against the common opinion of his time Weber claims that Reformation did not signify a weakening of control of the individual's life-conduct but a change in its forms. For him the significance of Reformation lay in the introduction of forms of regimentation which appeared intolerable to people of his own time:

> "Aber dann ist zu berücksichtigen, was heute oft vergessen wird, daß Reformation nicht sowohl die Beseitigung der kirchlichen Herrschaft über das Leben überhaupt, als vielmehr die Ersetzung der bisherigen Form derselben durch eine andere bedeutete und zwar die Ersetzung einer höchst bequemen, praktisch damals wenig fühlbaren, vielleicht fast nur noch formalen Herrschaft durch eine im denkbar weitgehenden Maße in alle Sphären des häuslichen und öffentlichen Lebens eindringende, unendlich lästige und ernstgemeinte Reglementierung der ganzen Lebensführung." (NWB-Edition, 2-3).

This should not be understood as a denial that Reformation undoubtedly opened new spaces for manoeuvring the individual's life-conduct. It surely removed important rituals, ceremonies, and Church authorities characteristic of the Catholic doctrine regarding the worldly life. The contingency of salvation of the individual's soul was obvious in the mainstream Catholic doctrine, based on summarizing the 'good deeds and sins'. Weber sees that in radical versions of Protestantism the reduction of external control of worldly life was complemented by a stricter internal control of the life-con-

duct concerning the existential question of salvation. The study of the Protestant ethic is, among other things, one on the rhetorical means by which the new contingency of life-conduct, a by-product of Reformation, was closed from within.

In Weber's work this closure is connected with his main thesis on an internal link, or in his Goethean terms an 'elective affinity' (*Wahlverwandtschaft*) (op.cit., 51) between the radical Protestant ethic and economic success:

> "die Herrschaft des Calvinismus, so wie sie im 16. Jahrhundert in Genf und Schottland, um die Wende des 16. und 17. in großen Teilen der Niederlände, im 17. in Neuengland und zeitweise in England selbst in Kraft stand, wäre für uns die schlechthin unerträglichste Form der kirchlichen Kontrolle des einzelnen, die es gegeben könnte. Nicht ein Zuviel, sondern ein Zuwenig von kirchlich-religiöser Beherrschung des Lebens war es ja, was gerade diejenigen Reformatoren, welche in den ökonomisch entwickeltesten Ländern erstanden, zu tadeln fanden." (ibid., 3).

For my present purposes this elective affinity forms the background for Weber's examination of the mechanisms and procedures which demand a strict control of the life-conduct among radical Protestants. But why was this control not only tolerated but also celebrated?

> "Wie kommt es nun, daß es damals gerade diese ökonomisch entwickeltesten Länder, und innerhalb ihrer gerade die ökonomisch aufsteigenden bürgerlichen Klassen jene puritanische Tyrannei nicht etwa nur über sich ergehen ließen, sondern in ihrer Verteidigung ein Heldentum entwickelten." (ibid.).

Weber's answer can be reformulated in rhetorical terms which helps to understand the character of this closure. I refer here to the classical figures of *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*, linked in a Perelmanian manner to the three aspects of the rhetorical situation: the rhetor, the audience and the argument. I will also use another classical triad: the distinction between deliberative, forensic and epideictic rhetoric. This triad allows us to specify the links between *ethos*, *pathos*

and *logos* in the special situation discussed by Weber. Finally I will cast attention to some specific rhetorical figures such as analogy and metonymy, used in Weber's argumentation.

The *ethos* aspect is, of course, most explicit in *Die Protestantische Ethik*. Its significance is emphasized in Weber's famous discussion on Benjamin Franklin's celebration of increased enrichment as a duty, which was characterized by Weber as "an ethically colored maxim in the life-conduct" (ibid., 13-14). In the 1920 Edition Weber stresses the role of difference between ethical and prudential maxims:

> "In der Tat, daß hier nicht einfach Lebenstechnik, sondern eine eigentümliche 'Ethik' gepredigt wird, deren Verletzung nicht nur als Torheit, sondern als eine Art von Pflichtvergessenheit behandelt wird: dies vor allem gehört zum Wesen der Sache. Es ist nicht nur 'Geschäftsklugheit', was da gelehrt wird – dergleichen findet sich auch sonst oft genug –: es ist ein Ethos, welches sich äußert, und in eben dieser Qualität interessiert es uns." (STB Edition, 42).

Here, the relation between *ethos* and ethic is worth closer attention. 'The techniques of life' or prudential maxims can be included in the category of *ethos*, while ethic for Weber is only a special form of *ethos*. It is an *ethos* which is not based on any rules of thumb or strategic devices but on universal norms or principles. Prudential maxims or strategic 'techniques of life' include relativistic features in the judgment of situations which would open up aspects of contingency unknown to the rituals and ceremonies of Catholicism. But they themselves would be insufficient to form a Christian alternative to Catholicism in the context of Reformation. A prudential *ethos* would rather apply, as an alternative form of life-conduct in the context of Reformation, to a Neo-Paganism à la Machiavelli which Weber, unfortunately, never discussed.

The radical Protestants' exclusion of contingency from the conduct of an individual's life was, thus, achieved by a radically internal form of normative control. In order to understand the acceptability of internal control Weber discusses alongside *ethos* both the *logos* of Protestant theology and the *pathos* of a radical Protestant

audience in which the *ethos* of self-control was constructed and celebrated.

In Weber's argument, the *logos* of the situation consists of the doctrine of predestination. The doctrine was not accepted by all variants of radical Protestantism, but it was understood as a central and provocative point in both Calvinism and in later forms of radical Protestantism. Within the theological horizon of predestination the existential question of whether an individual is doomed to Hell or saved in Heaven appeared as the only important question. Predestination made the individual's dependence on God total and his influence on God's decisions impossible. Weber quotes from the Westminster confession (1647) which maintained that God had made 'his' decisions before the existence of earth (NWB Edition, 58). The Protestant God is a decisionist who made 'his' decision before the start of the game of life and who does not declare it until the Last Judgment. The *arcana imperii* of God remains hidden to human beings, including the faithful Christians.

From Submission to Self-instrumentalization

The *logos* of predestination forced the individual Christian to face a radical alternative to the Catholic practice of punctual addition and subtraction of sins and good deeds. However there is no intended connection between the doctrine of predestination and a definite form of ethical control of life, still less between it and the Puritan type of work ethic. Weber's key point is to rhetorically establish the historical link between them.

What kind of *ethos* was imaginable within the horizon of a Calvinist doctrine of predestination? This question is discussed by Weber not as a theological problem but as rhetorical one, as a practical problem of life-conduct among the adherents of the doctrine. Weber s point of departure is an unintended consequence of the doctrine of predestination: the sense of individual isolation, or a "Gefühl einer unerhörten inneren Vereinsamung des einzelnen Individuums" (op.cit., 62). Unlike Catholicism everyone faced God in the form of a single-person-audience (cf. Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, op.cit., 46-53). In facing the existential 'either-or' question

of salvation no one could rely on the experiences of others. All this led to a 'disillusioned, pessimistic individualism' which according to Weber was still present in his time among people with a Puritan past (NWB-Edition, 63).

Despite the singularity of the existential experience some models which confront the situation were found, and they introduced a different rhetorical aspect to the situation. Weber discusses this aspect by analyzing the practical handbooks of *Seelsorge* (soul-caring) used by the churches and sects with a Calvinist world view. The handbooks tried to offer surrogates to *certitudo salutatis*, i.e. devices whereby the existential contingency of salvation could be faced. The first device was self-affirmation which takes it as duty to presume one's own salvation:

> "Es wird einerseits schlechthin zur Pflicht gemacht, sich für erwählt zu halten, und jeden Zweifel als Anfechtung des Teufels abzuweisen, da ja mangelnde Selbstgewißheit Folge unzulänglichen Glaubens, also unzulänglicher Wirkung der Gnade sei. ...An Stelle der demütigen Sünder... werden jene selbstgewissen 'Heiligen' gezüchtet, die wir in den stahlharten puritanischen Kaufleuten jenes heroischen Zeitalters des Kapitalismus und in einzelnen Exemplaren bis in die Gegenwart wiederfinden." (op.cit, 70-71).

If we cannot say anything about God's choice, the best strategy for life-conduct is not to worry about it but behave *as if* salvation was a certainty. If God is silent about the salvation in all individual cases, why not simply assume that everyone who firmly believes in God will be saved by 'him'? This rhetorical strategy is never refutable in the world and it reaffirms a certain dignity of man in a manner which does not deny the omnipotence or arbitrariness of God but practically neutralizes some of their aspects.

Additionally the *ethos* of self-affirmation gives a practical advantage in the world over those who worry about their fate on the Day of Judgment. The self-affirmatory *ethos* of the faithful Christians also contains a *pathos* of superiority over others, as if one could claim that 'God is on our side'.

The silence of God can, however, always raise doubts about the

validity or applicability of this pragmatic rule of thumb. This is especially true if the person turns from the peer audience of faithful Christians to self-deliberation before the silent God. In order to support the self-assurance regarding salvation Weber emphasizes the role of another rhetorical device for practical soul-caring, that is the restless engagement in work:

> "Und andererseits wurde, um jene Selbstgewißheit zu erlangen, als hervorragendstes Mittel rastlose Berufsarbeit eingeschärft. Sie und sie allein verscheuche den religiösen Zweifel und gebe die Sicherheit des Gnadenstandes." (op.cit.,71)

The *ethos* of ascetic Protestantism is characterized by an ambivalent combination of Cartesianism and anti-Cartesianism. Weber stresses the former aspect explicitly:

> "Nur ein durch *konstante Reflexion* geleitetes Leben aber kann als Überwindung des status naturalis gelten. Descartes' 'cogito ergo sum' wurde in *dieser ethischen* Umdeutung von den zeitgenössischen Puritanern übernommen."

A Cartesian ethic connects the existential question of salvation with the ethical question of one's life-conduct which should be made as reflective as possible. But the practical maxim of soul-caring, which allows salvation to be concluded from life-conduct, leads to an anti-Cartesian suspension of all doubt, reflection and deliberation. Within the horizon of a theology of total predestination the situation of human beings is characterized by their *incapacity of deliberating* their fate on the Day of Judgment. God as an absolute decisionist, who has already made 'his' choices, cannot be influenced by any arguments of deliberation concerning future fates. The decisionist God resembles the Schmittian (1922, 83) absolute sovereign whose decisions are not debatable, deliberative or justifiable.

Weber insists, however, that in the case of ascetic Protestantism the doctrine of predestination did not lead to Fatalism. On the contrary, predestination unintentionally led to particularly eager forms of engagement in work. A rhetorical re-interpretation of the Christian's situation, connecting the theological *logos* with a specific *ethos* of activity, was achieved by a supplementary assump-

tion about the human situation. According to Weber's argument the Protestants understood themselves as active instruments of God working in the world:

> "Die Gemeinschaft Gottes mit seinen Begnadeten kann vielmehr nur so stattfinden und zum Bewußtsein kommen, daß Gott in ihnen wirkt (operatur) und daß sie sich dessen bewußt werden, daß also ihr Handeln aus dem durch Gottes Gnade gewirkten Glauben entspringt und dieser Glaube wiederum sich durch die Qualität jenes Handelns als von Gott gewirkt legitimiert." (op.cit., 72-73)

A self-instrumentalization of human beings was turned into a rhetorical measure of self-legitimation which makes the doctrine of predestination tolerable. The question of salvation still appears as one of divine arbitrariness. However the silence of God in the lifetime of men and women concerning their fate is rhetorically relativized if it is combined with an instrumentalization of the human situation. The idea of deliberating personal salvation is relinquished and replaced by a forensic rhetoric: human beings understand themselves as an audience of God's past decisions about their own future existential fate. In this perspective the normative question concerning the future fate of a person is, correspondingly, practically suspended in favour of the hermeneutic question about the signs of God's will:

> "'Sola fide' will auch der Reformierte selig werden, aber da schon nach Calvins Ansicht alle bloßen Gefühle und Stimmungen trügerisch sind, muß der Glaube sich in seinen objektiven Wirkungen bewähren, um der certitudo salutatis als sichere Unterlage dienen zu können: er muß eine 'fides efficax' sein." (op. cit., 73)

The doctrine of 'efficient faith' contains a rhetorically impressive analogy to the teleological structure of the 'instrument of God'-ontology. Efficiency is only intelligible in relation to a given criterion, to the salvation of a weak human being through the omnipotent God. If faith is an instrument of salvation, those who have strong faith supposedly have better chances of salvation than others. In

order to obtain such a sense of superiority over others, however, mere self-affirmation is not sufficient. In the Weberian perspective the specificity of ascetic Protestantism lies in the combination of the instrumentalist view of human beings with an auxiliary thesis on the 'objective impact' of the strength of faith.

Weber's argument is based on a rhetoric of analogy. In the theology of predestination the existential question of salvation is made tolerable by theological anthropology. Human beings interpret themselves as being instruments of God and pragmatically mitigate the epistemological incertitude concerning God's decision by evoking the possibility to read the signs of faith. The doctrine of 'efficient faith' combines an instrumentalist epistemology of signs with the instrumentalist view of the situation of human beings before God. With this analogy, the doctrine of predestination loses its fatalistic implications and instead forms a horizon for efficient worldly action.

The figure of efficiency connects two independent forms of instrumental relations: the efficiency of faithful individuals as ontological instruments of the celebration of God and effective faith as an instrument of the existential salvation of individuals. We can detect a metonymic form of 'elective affinity' between the two situations.

When the possibility of an efficient faith is given, it is further used as a basis for a whole system of instrumental relations of efficiency:

> "Stellt man nun weiter die Frage, an welchen Früchten der Reformierte denn den rechten Glauben unzweifelhaft zu erkennen vermöge, so wird wiederum geantwortet: an einer Lebensführung der Christen, die zur Mehrung von Gottes Ruhm dient. Was dazu dient, ist aus seinem, direkt in der Bibel offenbarten oder indirekt aus den von ihm geschaffenen zweckvollen Ordnungen der Welt (lex naturae) ersichtlichen, Willen zu entnehmen." (op.cit., 73-74)

If faith allows degrees in efficiency then the significance of the silence of God concerning the selection of those for Heaven is relativized. Those who manifest a strong faith can be taken as ap-

proximate, metonymic paradigms for a life-conduct which is supposed to lead to Heaven. Even if God has not made 'his' decisions public 'he' has given through the Bible and in the lives of 'paradigmatic Christians', models which should be imitated as effectively as possible.

> "So absolut ungeeignet also gute Werke sind, als Mittel zur Erlangung der Seligkeit zu dienen – denn auch der Erwählte bleibt Kreatur, und alles was er tut, bleibt in unendlichem Abstand hinter Gottes Anforderungen zurück, so unentbehrlich sind sie als Zeichen der Erwählung." (op.cit., 74)

The point is neither to imitate God (which would be blasphemy) nor to deny the incommensurability of God's activity with that of human beings. But the Christian can learn to interpret signs of faith given by God. This hermeneutics of signs of the divine selection among humankind is, in the form of a forensic rhetoric, made a part of the Puritan ethic. The self-affirmation of the status of being elected by God must be completed by a conduct adapted to the signs of God's blessings. Contrary to the Catholic's punctual account, the radical Protestant systematicizes the life-conduct in order to make it accord with the signs.

> "Der Gott des Calvinismus dagegen verlangt von den Seinen und bewirkt in ihnen nicht einzelne 'gute Werke', sondern ein 'heiliges Leben', d.h eine zum System gesteigerte Werkheiligkeit. Die ethische Praxis des Alltagsmenschen wird ihrer Plan- und Systemlosigkeit entkleidet und zu einer konsequenten Methode der ganzen Lebensführung ausgestaltet." (op.cit., 77)

The figure of efficiency does not remain a mere technique. In combination with a forensic rhetoric concerning God's past decisions, efficiency is amplified and purified into a general system and method for the entire life-conduct. Weber s point is that in ascetic Protestantism the systematic and methodical character of life-conduct receives an ethical quality. The conflict between *ad hoc* rules and a system of rules, or between the opportunistic and the methodical forms of control of life-conduct, turns out to be more important than the content of ethical principles.

Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists do not essentially differ in their conceptions of good and bad, sin and grace, but they do differ in their judgment of the significance of single acts for the existential question of salvation. According to Weber this led unintendedly to different attitudes towards worldly success.

The main point in Weber's story is that a teleological rhetoric of efficiency based on a forensic rhetoric about God's decisions is combined with a definite view of work as a duty. If there is something which is an end in itself in worldly life it is success, especially economic success. In a metonymical manner success is taken as a sign of salvation and combined with the instrumental view of the meaning of human life. This is the point of Weber's Franklin-quotation:

> "Der Mensch ist auf das Erwerben als Zweck seines Lebens, nicht mehr das Erwerben auf den Menschen als Mittel zum Zweck der Befriedigung seiner materiellen Lebensbedürfnisse bezogen." (op.cit., 15)

To sum up: the contingency of *Lebensführung* opened by the Reformation is effectively closed from within. This closure is not due to the doctrine of predestination alone. Rather it is linked to a rhetorical mitigation of the thesis on the human ignorance of God's will, together with an instrumental view of the human situation and with an hermeneutics of the signs of salvation. In the audience of self-affirmed Protestants this combination allows for the development of a systematic and methodological *ethos*.

The Politics of Life-conduct

In radical Protestantism God remains the only 'player with contingency' in so far as the 'reality' of salvation is concerned. In worldly affairs, however, human beings can turn the situation to their advantage by following a biblical model: 'those who will be the last, shall be the first'. A methodical ability, not only to read the signs of God's forensic rhetoric but also to systematically adapt one's conduct to them, gives human beings a chance to turn the existential question of salvation into a hermeneutic one which gives a place to

human efforts. Human beings face two existential choices: the affirmation of faith and the choice of a systematic form of life-conduct. The systematization subordinates all the other choices in life-conduct: practically nothing is considered as irrelevant to the system and every choice is subsumed to the superior viewpoint. The choice of Christian faith is turned into a choice of a systematic mode of life conduct.

In terms of Weber's political theory, the hermeneutic of signs about God's past decisions serves in radical Protestantism as an oblique *Machtanteil* (power-share) concerning the individual's life-conduct in relation to others (cf. *Politik als Beruf*, MWS I/17, 36). But this share can only be used if combined with a methodical utilization of the chances for acceptable ends.

How far Weber's portrait of the radical Protestant is a self-portrait is an open question among the Weberologists. Anyhow Weber's discussion of *Beruf* and *Ethos* of the Protestant also shapes his view of the scholar and the politician. In *Politik als Beruf* Weber accepts, after having at first admitted that power can be used either as a means to an end or as an end in itself (ibid.), that only the former alternative is proper for the politician. The 'enjoyment' of power is rejected (ibid., 75). For a Weberian politician the Protestant's earnestness and methodical orientation towards some previously chosen end exclude possibility of a playful and 'opportunistic' use of power shares to ends chosen in light of the special chances available at the moment. The figure of power as a chance is the decisive novelty of the Weberian conception of politics, although Weber tries in advance to prevent some of its possible yet unwanted consequences.

The argumentation in *Die protestantische Ethik* finally offers a paradigm for the Weberian mode of thinking in terms of overcoming the means-end-dualism with the pair *Chancen-Nebenfolgen* (cf. *Die 'Objektivität'*, 149-150). Weber's points of departure lie in the unintended consequences of Reformation, especially the experience of the contingency of human fate dependent on an omnipotent God. The figure of chance becomes a key to create, with rhetorical means, a *Spielraum* for action even where none seems to exist. But to make use of these chances again leads to unintended consequences which

were turned in to a system Weber called 'the Protestant ethic'. The 'background contingency' of the doctrine of predestination is turned in to an 'operative' contingency of chances which, in turn, are contrasted with new sorts of contingency of unintended consequences.

The pair *Chancen-Nebenfolgen* is also the paradigm of operative contingency in Weber's political theory. I have called its introduction into the language of politics 'the Weberian moment' as opposed to Pocock's 'Machiavellian moment', operating with the classical pair *fortuna-virtù* and treating contingency only as a background figure of action and not as an operative instance of action. To present this argumentation is another story to be told elsewhere. But it is interesting to detect the same figure of argumentation also in Weber's interpretation on the micro-politics of Protestant ethic.

References

Aristoteles *Rhetorik*. German transl. & ed. by Franz G. Sievecke. München: UTB 1988.

Hennis, Wilhelm (1987) *Max Webers Fragestellung*. Tübingen: Mohr.

Lichtblau, Klaus and Weiß, Johannes (1993) Einleitung der Herausgeber. In Klaus Lichtblau and Johannes Weiss (eds.), *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*, VII-XXXV. Bodenheim: Hain.

Palonen, Kari (1994) Max Weber's Rhetorical Construction of the Politician. In *Politics, Rhetoric and Conceptual History*. Studia Political Jyväskyläensia 6.

Perelman, Chaïm and Olbrechts-Tyteca, Lucie (1958) *Traité de l'argumentation. La nouvelle rhétorique*. Bruxelles: Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles 1983.

Pocock, J.G.A. (1975) *The Machiavellian Moment*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Scaff, Lawrence (1989) *Fleeing the Iron Cage*. Berkeley: The University of California Press.

Schmitt, Carl (1922) *Politische Theologie*. Berlin: Duncker and Humblot 1979.

Weber, Max (1904) Die 'Objektivität' sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis. *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, 146-214. Tübingen: Mohr 1973.

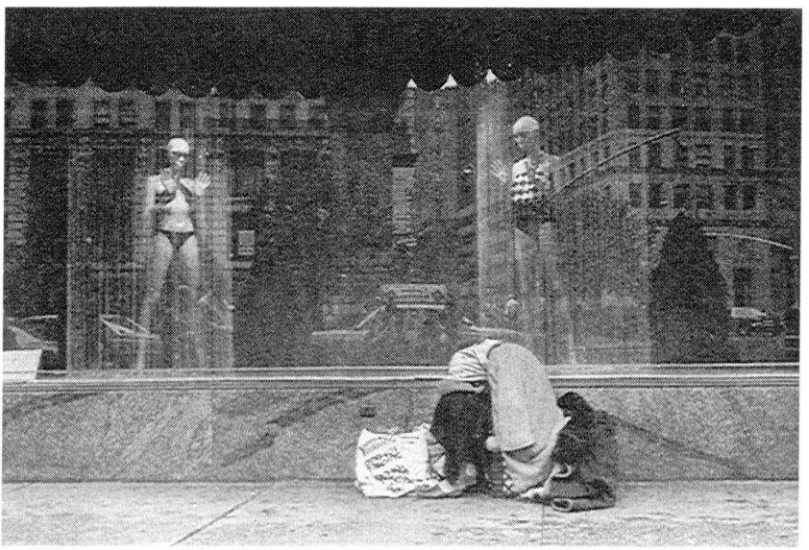
Weber, Max (1905) *Die protestantische Ethik und der 'Geist' des Kapitalismus*, ed. by Klaus Lichtblau & Johannes Weiß. Bodenheim: Hain 1993 (NWB-Edition).
Weber, Max (1919) Politik als Beruf. *Max-Weber-Studienausgabe* I /17, 35-88. Tübingen: Mohr 1994.
Weber, Max (1920) *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*, ed. by Johannes Winckelmann. München: Siebenstern, 1967 (STB-Edition).

IV Image-Space of Political Action

Kia Lindroos

The Shopping Bag Lady and Politics

Visualization and Temporalization of Politics through Benjaminian Ideas



Ann Marie Rousseau: Shopping Bag Lady, 1980.

Introduction

A photograph consists of space. It is a restricted space in which action is standing still, waiting for movement to continue. Additionally, among many other things, it is a sign of action, vision, or perception at a certain moment. A photograph is also a crossing point between an observer and an object in their temporal and spatial positions: this makes it an example of political image-space.

Ann Marie Rousseau's *Shopping Bag Lady* (1980) actualizes the themes of image and action. The aim of the following analysis is to raise the political aspects of the themes of public and private, history and politics, reading and seeing, all that which a photograph expresses. The image here is represented as a constellation of ideas which can be thematically reconstructed in connection with theoretical ideas (of time and space). In a way, the photograph exists at the crossroads of these ideas and their "visualization".

The ideas that follow are based on my earlier studies of Walter Benjamin's (1892-1940) thinking, especially on his philosophy of history.[1] I will try to combine his conception of time and space through the heterogeneous concepts of "dialectical image" (*dialektisches Bild*) and "image-space" (*Bildraum*). Benjamin argues that there has been a Copernican change from historical to political categories of thinking (Benjamin 1983, 495). This change inaugurates a new conception of time, notably a shift towards the primacy of present time. In this context Benjamin is one of the few philosophers who have paid attention to the present time and the "Now-time" (*Jetztzeit*) in general, especially as a shift towards the temporalization of politics.

The moment of "now" comprises the experience Now which emerges as a point of contradiction to a specific past and an equally specific present. In this moment of temporal connection – which is also called a dialectical image – remembering the past is deconstructed by destroying the historically pre-established image of the past. This makes it possible to question the nature of tradition as a given truth and open up possibilities for temporal, political, philosophical or aesthetic experience through the moment Now.

The temporalization of *politics* is called "avant-garde experi-

ence" by Peter Osborne (Osborne 1994, 61). I will begin by comparing this view with Reinhart Koselleck's ideas about temporalization of *history*. The terms "avant-gardian" or "political" experience of history refer to the destruction of a continuous time concept. In the background of temporalization is also a general problematization of the linear time concept in history and philosophy[2] and the correlation between the concepts of time and politics.[3] The issue of experience also makes the question a part of an aesthetic discussion. Temporal aspects of photography are discussed here as parallel to political experience concerning its specific construction of time and space.

Benjamin as a Philosopher of Time and Image

So an das Gewesene herangehen, das heißt nicht wie bisher es auf historische sondern auf politische Art, in politischen Kategorien behandeln. (To approach the past in this way is not called historical, as it was called before, but a political way of dealing with the past within political categories.) (Benjamin 1983, 495)

The concepts of temporalization and history were interconnected in Koselleck's book *Vergangene Zukunft* (Futures Past, 1985). Koselleck locates the era of the temporalization of history (*Verzeitlichung der Geschichte*) between 1750 and 1850 which he characterizes as "saddletime". In this context of *Neuzeit* Koselleck sees a certain dynamic in which historical concepts – especially political and social ones – are coined for the registration and embodiment of the elements and forces of history (Koselleck 1985, 232). The temporalization of history signified a change from a static towards a dynamic understanding of time and history. In addition, it was a time of reflection on the concept of progress.

It is notable that Koselleck does not pay much attention to the present. In this context it is interesting to discuss the temporalization of politics. Benjamin's later thinking is characterized by criticism of a linear understanding of time and history as well as reflection and criticism of the concept of progress. For him this idea of progress, traditionally seen as an elementary condition for politics, is a catastrophic one. The idea of progress belongs to the historical

category of thinking because it does not question the continuous image of time. Although one can talk about progress it can only be in the sense of the "first step", (meaning an introduction of a new idea, concept, or action) and not as the repetition of ideas or action. This problematizes the whole futuristic nature of prediction: an aspect of the future is already apparent in the present time, and Benjamin quotes Leibniz to this effect: *le présent est gros de l'avenir*.

For Koselleck, prediction is a conscious element of political action: "It is related to events whose novelty it releases. The prognosis itself, then, continually radiates time in a generally predictable but actually uncertain fashion" (Koselleck 1985, 14). There can be no truth in this prognosis as it can be changed and renewed. The time factor draws attention to the novelty of time. In this sense it reminds us of Benjamin's conception of progress as a first step towards the new. Fashion (as will be seen later) includes both sides of the theme: novelty (fashion also predicts future trends) and the change and variation of the past. As Benjamin writes in *Zentralpark*: "Fashion is the eternal recurrence of the new. Nevertheless, aren't there motives of salvation (*Rettung*) precisely in fashion?" (Benjamin 1955, 243).

For Benjamin the present includes both the moment and the site of the actuality of the past. The past is contingent upon the actuality of the present (Benjamin 1940, V). The present neither belongs to a chronological understanding of time nor is an Aristotelian "point of linear time" or a *nunc stans*. Rather it is – as Benjamin and Osborne put it – "the result of a complex act of temporalization which is always contested" (Benjamin and Osborne 1994, xii). On the other hand, historical images belong to a certain temporal context and it is possible to interpret them only at a certain time. Also "in every era the attempt must be made anew to wrest tradition away from conformism that is about to overpower it" (Benjamin, 1940, VI).

Tradition is presented as a constellation of (historical) images (*Denkbilder*) which should be seen as separate from the continuous understanding of history. The temporal structure behind the visual image and its readability (*Lesbarkeit*) is characterized as dialectical which means that the position of the reader should be seen as

being at the crossroads between the past and the present. However, the concrete image itself is a presentation of dialectics standing still (*im Stillstand*) (Benjamin 1983, 576-578). In other words, the flow of time and historical movement are suddenly interrupted. In this break present time re-presents itself through the image.

Images such as a photograph are supposed to conserve some historical moments. The representation of momentary truth could also be seen as an opportunity to get nearer to some historical "truth" as a set of events at a certain time. The interpretation of these events produces the consciousness of the moment itself. In Benjamin's thinking, the concept of the political refers to the actualization of historical moments in the present, not to seeing them as a linear repetition of different events, and their causes and effects.

In the preceding I have pointed out how it could be possible to talk about the temporalization of politics within the more common categories of future or history. Next I would like to add the concept of *action* to this temporal context and note how it becomes a central theme within the perspective change towards the present time. The Benjaminian idea could be compared to Hannah Arendt's concept of action (*Handeln*). Essential for Arendt is that through acting, persons are creating something new.[4] It is actually understood as a new beginning comparable to the birth of a human being. Action creates an entry into the human and the political world in the same way in which birth lets us gain entry into the physical world.[5] For Arendt action constitutes history: she sees history as variable as the actors within it, and it is impossible to edit or compose a universal totality of history.

The Question of Time and Space in Pictorial Metaphors

Benjamin understands action as pure and momentary without the burden of tradition. Konersmann calls the Benjaminian conception an *acte gratuite* (Konersmann 1991, 126-127). "Pure" action is situated on a temporal borderline; in this sense it calls for something which is beyond routine and which is undetermined and unteleological.

For the possibility to act Benjamin has constructed two pictorial metaphors: the dialectical image (*dialektisches Bild*) and image-space (*Bildraum*). In order to illustrate these metaphors I use the photograph *Shopping Bag Lady* (see following page) which can be found in Susan Buck-Morss Benjamin-study *Dialectics of Seeing* (Buck-Morss 1990, 347).

In this photograph three appearances are present, two of which are in the background. They are the dummies which stand in a shop window from which a typical city view, a view of a public space, is mirrored. The dummies are separated from the foreground by curtains which mark their transparent "privacy". In the front an old woman is crouching, creating an impression of tiredness and perhaps sadness.

The dummies in the shop window, the images of fashion, could be seen in this connection as (dialectical) images of desire which are turning against the old-fashioned. In the sense of the materialistic writing of history the "products" of the community could be understood as the dreams and desires of the people as well as material products. The "collective desire" is turned towards the new and at the same time against the old, meaning against the almost already gone. The images of fashion, as images of desire, are reminders of dreams focused on the future.

The dimension of fashion includes the subject of novelty and eternity. For example, the Baudelairean perspective of novelty means to extract the new away from the ever-same: this happens in the name of the eternal. By contrast Nietzsche faces the matter with "heroic composure" with the acknowledgement that there will never be anything really new. Benjamin does not agree with either of them: he is searching for a break in the temporal or historical structure in order to open up a new form of historical or political experience (cf. Osborne 1994, 84). On the other hand, in fashion generations renew themselves. In this sense it is not very difficult to think about fashion as a sign at the crossing point of different periods of time, including some elements of profane or material "salvation" of younger generations.

Benjamin's concept of dialectical image (*Dialektisches Bild*) is basically created through a temporal experience whereby dialectics

means the movement between the past and the present. The image is constructed in the confrontation of these two aspects. The experience of Now-time can be understood, for example, as a moment in reading a text or a quotation when the reader's experience is confronted by the writer's experience. This could be seen as parallel to an aesthetic experience where the observer meets the object in a space of a picture or photograph. The experience itself is the key word which also describes the change from a linear or homogeneous concept of time towards a more discontinuous understanding of it.

In this connection Benjamin uses the concept of Now-Being (*Jetztsein*) which is the parallel of "being awake". This Being is something which is above an unreflected historical identity. It is a discontinuous and impulsive being which is able to act in the temporal frame of Now-time (Benjamin 1983, 495). If we distinguish the moment of Now as a specific political time, could the Now-being be understood as a political being or consciousness? This movement of Being actively steps into the flow of time and disturbs common expectations of seeing and experiencing. It is connected with the concept of a surrealistic or avant-gardian experience although here the temporal factor including action and possibility are even more centrally defining conditions of the Being.

The experience of Now-time means a sudden interruption of the flow of events in general. In this sense a photograph is almost the best document of it whilst it also concretizes the aspect of thinking in political categories. The eyes of an interpreter not only see three women but also the marks of capitalism, the naked ideas of fashion, the boundary between rich and poor, and signs and symbols of power and powerlessness.[6]

The temporal aspect of the dialectical image in Rousseau's photograph could be described in the following way. The aspect of the past refers to the old lady whose experience draws from the past to the present. This could be compared to Reinhart Koselleck's concept "space of experience" (*Erfahrungsraum*) in the field of personal/individual history (Koselleck 1985, 167ff.). Koselleck emphasizes that there is no history which could be constituted independently of the categories of experience and expectations. These

categories do not convey any historical reality as such: here they are used as expressions of the contradictions within the image.

The future, which as Leibniz claims, is "born" in the present time, is represented through two young and futuristic persons who symbolize the idea of eternal youth – or the "horizon of expectations" (*Erwartungsraum*). For the Bag Lady, time no longer seems to be full of expectations and desires: experience has overgrown them. However, the dummies represent future desires enwrapped in forever increasing dreams.

Benjamin describes the difference between seeing before and after the advent of modern technology, as in the presence or lack of aura in photography.[7] Mechanical reproduction means destroying the "auratic" unity of time and place. Where this unity is broken, as in the modern era, the connection of objects to their temporal and spatial context go through a change. This leads us to another possible question concerning the photograph besides the temporal problem is the spatial aspect: how are the people posed in the image and where do the observer and the photographer situate themselves? The "shock" of the photograph is represented through the inability to resolve the confrontation. There is no space to stay in-between and the observer is provoked to make a choice of where to stand and to which part of the image to attach her/his emotions. Michael Shapiro refers to Benjamin in another context as follows:

> "Benjamin noted that modern capitalism had produced a spatial anarchy in which traditional separations of locations such as the public and private had broken down 'just as the living room reappears on the street...the street migrates into the living room' and temporal practices for sleeping and eating had lost their consistency." (Shapiro 1996, 15-16.)

Here the new observer is created through temporal and spatial figures. As was noted above, the new observer – or Being – could also be characterized as political. In addition, the conception of spatial anarchy illustrates well the positions in Rousseau's image whereby old dreams are "standing still" and new ones are still in the process of creation. The broken boundary between the private and the public is also included in the "inner space" of the image, in the appear-

ances of privacy shown in the public place.

The other pictorial metaphor, image-space (*Bildraum*), temporally precedes the dialectical image in Benjamin's essay *Der Sürrealismus* (1929). It means a simultaneous connection between a body and image-space (*Leib- und Bildraum*) which makes it a rather difficult concept to use and translate. The subject is supposed to enter into the image as it might enter a real/physical space. The body is also a factor which distinguishes the spatial aspects and connections inside the image. In the essay *Über Malerei*[8] Benjamin describes image-space as residing in the relationship between the visual perception and the imperceptible "inner space" of the painting. Here the non-representational (*Nicht-Darstellbare*) aspect and the material part of the painting are intertwined. In this aesthetic idea for example bodily space, distance, and the spatial aspects of the body are interconnected (cf. Weigel 1992, 49ff.).

According to Benjamin, surrealist politics emphasize the terrain beyond normality and order: one should discover the full image-space in the space of political acting. This perspective illuminates the space behind the surface like a radiograph (Benjamin 1929, 207). Benjamin parallels the arts of political and aesthetic experience perceiving both as immediate opportunities for revolutionary politics. In this space the opportunity for action is opened.

Referring to the surrealists' historical importance as representatives of the idea of specific political experience, the movement from arts (in the form of traditional *l'art pour l'art*) to politics is seen by Benjamin as opening up the possibility of politics as a phenomenon of experience. As Osborne sees it the importance of the present lies additionally in trying to seek out the "ecstatic components" (which for surrealists are part of revolutionary acts) in everyday life. In this way "ecstasy" is both secularized (*profane Erleuchtung*) and politicized (Osborne, 1994, 63).

To sum up, the image-space opens up at the moment when distance disappears between action and the actor in different connections. It springs from breaking the boundaries between the objects of seeing and the eyes of an observer. I regard Michael Shapiro's analysis of Benetton's poster depicting an H.I.V. positive individual as a good example of this.[9] A film also has a comparable effect

when the observer situates him/herself as a part of the happenings on the screen.

The unity of a subjective experience expressed in "profane ecstacy" means secularizing and politicizing various components of the present in so-called everyday life. The present time expresses itself through different marks, traces and experiences. This is why I see the ability to read (or interpret, see, hear or sense) the present as important as reading the concrete and illusionary images or texts of the past.

The Public and the Private

In the chapter *Louis-Philippe oder das Interieur* of his *Passagen-Werk* Benjamin writes about the question of private and the public. A private person is understood when contrasted against to a working person, the working class or a workroom. This also refers to the question of the difference between the private space of life (*Lebensraum*) and the public. The contradiction of private and public spaces can also be reflected through architecture. For Benjamin, an example of the private architecture of the interior is the *Jugendstil* (Benjamin 1983, 52).

In the *Shopping Bag Lady* the traditional distinctions between private and public have broken down. The athmosphere of privacy is represented through the Bag Lady, who may be asleep. Her appearance constitutes an effective opposite to the two other "women", the dummies. Beneath the image Buck-Morss has placed the following quotation:

> "A bohemian woman sleeps, her head bent forward, her empty purse between her legs. Her blouse is covered with pins which glitter from the sun, and all her household and personal possessions: two brushes, an open knife, a closed bowl, are neatly arranged ... creating almost an intimacy, the shade of an interior around her." (Buck-Morss 1990, 347)

The old woman has brought her own interior into the street. Her unspoken right is to create an almost intimate privacy inside the public space; in addition, she is living on the street. In other words,

her living room (living space) is the street, which might make her a modern image of the flaneur of the 19th century. Or, as Ronald Barthes points out in his *La chambre claire*, privacy is the only sphere of time and space where the individual does not feel that he or she is an object or an image, but a subject. For Barthes, in this context, a political right means the right to defend this subjectivity (Barthes 1985, 21). In the image under consideration the Bag Lady defends her right to be a subject in a specific way: by making her privacy visible in a public space.

The other two female figures are presented courageously (supposing they were real persons) on the scene with only underwear or swimsuits on them. Their lack of clothing is shown as an opposite to the heavy clothes of the old woman. Their private space or living room is certainly not on the street, nevertheless, they have made their bodies public.

In some places in Benjamin's texts the "whore" is a symbolic and public appearance, parallel to the Flaneur, gambler or scavenger. These are appearances which materialize different positions (like outsiders) as a critique of capitalism. The material aspect is always apparent in these symbols, and a type like a whore is the seller and the product in one person (*die Verkäuferin und Ware in einem*) (Benjamin 1983, 55). However, none of these three types enjoys privacy, they are public figures who go through the world in the midst of events, yet are seen as institutionalized symbols without privacy.

In private life the individual usually leaves some traces (*Spuren*) behind. These are for example photos on the walls, little things in the drawer, or monograms on the pillow. Benjamin understands the ability to mark one's own privacy as a sign of the confirmability of bourgeois and hidden living as opposed to modern public places, bold or transparent rooms with glass walls (Weidmann 1992, 105-106). Benjamin compares this traditional art of living to the traceless living of flaneurs in a big city. These "people without traces" are asocial, and without a private place of their own where they could be identified. Are they criminals because they do not have any identifying privacy? In the photograph under examination the traceless being has taken the form of the Bag Lady. She might as

well be an immigrant in the modern world who does not have the right of privacy or is liberated from the identifying space of privacy.

The dilemma above is also connected with another topic which leads us back to the relationship between history and politics. For example one way of reading history is to examine the traces of other centuries. This makes evident why the Nietzschean critique on "monumental history of the winners" is also included in Benjamin's *Theses of History of Philosophy* (1940): a large number of people were not able to leave traces behind and so never got a history of their own. Benjamin in his way wants to "blow up the interior", which means destroying the history of a private person and making it common by politicizing it.

The Politics of Memory

The collector is *der wahre Insasse des Interieurs* (the true inhabitant of the interior, Benjamin 1983, 53). In a collection the dreams of history are seen in their original form as objects which no longer have practical utility but only emotional value (*Liebhaberwert*). To remember the already forgotten things of the past and to actualize the experience of remembering through action is something that Benjamin calls a "practical memory" (*ein praktisches Erinnern*), which could also be called *politics of memory*.

The concept of practical memory combines the contemplative and the active moments of remembrance in a way comparable to image-space. In this connection the unifying category is time, not space. The practical memory combines the theoretical (e.g. in the work of historians) and practical aspects of politics. Benjamin compares this to collecting (*Sammeln*). As parts of collections objects which earlier did not mean anything or were seen as useless are separated from their origins and from their functional or practical connections. They are set in new surroundings and connected to other "useless" objects. This collection constitutes a group or a series. Additionally, new meanings are created by naming the new group. One such specifically constructed group, to use this rather unconventional interpretation, is history.

Benjamin's understanding of history is based on the idea that history is constructed from different Now-time moments like pictures (photographs, works of art) and texts (quotations).The ability to read these marks is seen as parallel to rewriting or reformulating history. The linear interpretation of the past is replaced by the inclusion of shocking elements into the act of reading. One way to remember the forgotten or traceless aspects of the past is to follow Benjamin's dictum "read what has not been written".

An interesting example of this is photography. A specific political interpretation searches for some unconnected or invisible connections and similarities (*die unsinnlichen Ähnlichkeiten*). This demands finding the active position of an observer who interconnects the different elements of the image. Here reading means translating the similarities and experiences into the text. The whole text is seen as full of different levels and contents, interruptions and rereadings, which contribute to the destruction of the linear form of reading (cf. Benjamin 1933, 98).

In his study of Charles Baudelaire, Benjamin counterposes the concepts of aura and shock and relates this issue to the theme of experience. The concept of *Erlebnis* (an "all too modern sensation") in fact means the loss of experience whereas the "auratic" concept of experience refers to a uniform and continuous multiplicity of knowledge.[10] Benjamin sees Charles Baudelaire's prose as an important interpretation of the modern world. The remembrance of the past, which is included in people's world of experience (*mémoire involontaire*), turns into its opposite in a *mémoire volontaire*, an intellectual or rational act of remembering. This *mémoire volontaire* is constructed from *Erlebnisse*, and refers to a contingent and non-integrated way of experiencing.

As Benjamin shows in his early essay *On the Program of a Future Philosophy* (1919), the ideal experience means a subject's nearness to the "world of living" (in the sense of Edmund Husserl's *Lebenswelt*). It should be understood as a continuous and compact connection with knowledge (formed through empirical observations and intuitive understanding) and experience.[11] Experience, as Benjamin writes referring to Henri Bergson, is indeed a matter of tradition in collective existence as well as in private life. It is less

the product of facts in memory than a convergence of accumulated and frequently unconscious data. The whole existence of the subject is actually very close to the unity of experience (*Einheit der Erfahrung*) which means that the experiences are also an important link to the past and history.

The game of remembering and forgetting is closely connected with the modern question of political identity or subjectivity. Through the interpretation of the "crisis of the subject"[12] it has been found necessary to construct some new forms or ideas of subjectivity (in so far as the concept has been accepted at all) which either accept, deny or try to avoid the image of an integrated subject.

In the field of political science questions of history, remembering and forgetting are interesting when considering the analysis of new political identities like those of sexual minority groups, foreigners, environmental activists or women's movements. The heterogeneous groups are searching for identities which still need naming or even perhaps a new vocabulary, as Richard Rorty suggests. At the same time new "histories" are found in the process of remembering the forgotten aspects of the past.

Conclusion: The Temporalization of Politics

History in the Benjaminian or Nietzschean sense is the history of those who were not under the myth of the famous and the fortunate. This view of history is not an objection to history itself but to the way in which common interpretations influence our thinking and acting in current political life. Historical analysis in this sense presupposes the replacement of common history by marginal or ignored histories. These two aspects of common and marginal are actually shown together in Rousseau's photograph. She does not hide the "barbarian" side of civilization but shows the two aspects of civilized life simultaneously. The schock effect in the photograph might be this paradoxical *mis-en-scene*, the confrontation of two totally different worlds.

If we understand tradition like J.G.A. Pocock in his *Politics, Language and Time* (1989),[13] we think of it as an indefinite series of repetitive action which performs on the assumption that the ac-

tion has been performed before. The repetitive way of seeing tradition as a series is based on a non-linear understanding of time. To be outside tradition is for Pocock an example of charismatic action. Charismatic action (like anarchism) might be opposed to tradition but the criticism of tradition (as an intellectual act) is, nevertheless, connected with historical categories of thinking.

From this angle the Benjaminian perspective explicitly rejects an interpretation whereby tradition is conceptualized as a continuous or linear process. The dialectics of the past and the future are visualized in the question of the present. In the modern period of reproduction or – perhaps now – of simulacrum, the present is also subject to manipulation. Time as we understand it changes its shape and form, as does our understanding of space. The time factor is closely connected with the consciousness of a subject as well as with cultural and political changes.

In *Der Sürrealismus* Benjamin claims that one should recover the hundred percent image-space in political action, and that this space should not ultimately be understood as contemplative but as a bodily space (*Leibraum*). In Rousseau's photo the intellectually constructed space is inside the image, where the role of action lies in reading the similarities and invisible connections, as well as reading the temporal and spatial aspects of the image. The image expresses the widening of horizons towards the past and the present, challenging some of the common understandings of public and private places. Seeing the political as a Copernican shift from historical towards political ways of thinking reflects the temporality of experience and action. The attention is drawn to the action itself, as well as to the role of the actor or the observer.

In general, the boundary between private and public has been blurred in the (late) modern homes especially through the near-ubiquitous media. In addition, almost all spaces in western civilization can be be reached instantaneously from other spaces. In other words, privileges no longer exist as a center or a periphery, or as an origin or aim. This development seems to make it increasingly difficult to create such continuity of experience that would take us back to the linear and continuous image of time. Rather, the "inner space", the subjective temporal experience, is conceptualized in

terms of moments constructed through each present, as a process which is documented (photos/texts) or produced by films, media and computers. The network of spaces and places on different levels reminds us of the image-space where boundaries between observers and objects, distance and proximity are confused. Whether this is politiziced or not depends on the experience of time and space we share in contemporary culture.

Notes

[1] Cf. Lindroos 1992, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c.

[2] I refer here to extensive historical studies by Reinhart Koselleck (1959, 1979), Hans Blumenberg (1983), and philosophical studies connected with time and history, e.g. by Michel Foucault (1990) and Karl Löwith (1960, 1983). Each of these writers in his way questions the relationship between time and history.

[3] There are some, although not very many, studies of changing temporal structures in politics: e.g. Pierre Lenain (1987, 1989), Charles S. Maier (1987), Peter Osborne (1995).

[4] See Arendt 1970, 82-87; 1981, 164 ff.

[5] This interpretation is taken from Adriana Cavarero's paper *Space and Time in Hannah Arendt's Concept of Power*, 1994. Additionally, I thank Tuija Parvikko for commenting my notions of Arendt's conception of action.

[6] On the photograph as an exemplary dialectical image, see Sontag 1977, 24-25.

[7] Benjamin 1931 and 1934/35.

[8] Unpublished, can be found in Gesammelte Schriften, VI, 133 ff.

[9] In the presentation *Images of Planetary Danger*, in Jyväskylä, 26th April, 1994.

[10] On Benjamin's concept of "aura", see also the essay *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit* (1934/35). In Benjamin's texts, the concept of Erlebnis refers to the fact that the connection between events is more fragmentary than in experience.

[11] Benjamin 1919/1969, 18.

[12] The issue is discussed in several different fields: e.g. in the philosophy of language by Richard Rorty or among feminists, for instance, by Rosi Braidotti 1993, 1994.

[13] See also Pocock 1975, 5 ff.

References

Arendt, Hannah (1970) *On Violence*. New York, London: A Harvest/HBJ Book.

(1981) *Vita Activa oder Vom tätigen Leben*. München, Zürich: Piper.

Barthes, Roland (1985) *Valoisa huone* (La chambre claire). Kansankulttuuri, Suomen valokuvataiteen museon säätiö.

Benjamin, Andrew and Osborne, Peter (eds.) (1994) *Walter Benjamin's Philosophy. Destruction and Experience*. London and New York: Routledge.

Benjamin, Walter (1919) Über das Programm der kommenden Philosophie. In: *Zur Kritik der Gewalt und andere Aufsätze*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1965.

(1929) Der Sürrealismus. In: *Angelus Novus*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp 1988.

(1931) Kleine Geschichte der Photographie. In: *Angelus Novus*, Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1988.

(1933) Über das mimetische Vermögen. In: *Angelus Novus*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1988.

(1934/35) Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit. In: *Illuminationen*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1977.

(1936) Der Erzähler In: *Illuminationen*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1977.

(1940) Über den Begriff der Geschichte. In: *Illuminationen*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1977.

(1955) Zentralpark (Translation by Azade Seyhan) In: *Illuminationen*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1977.

(1983) *Das Passagen-Werk*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp..

(GS) *Gesammelte Schriften VI*. Unter Mitwirkung von Adorno und Scholem. Hg. Tiedemann und Schweppenhäuser. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp.

Blumenberg, Hans (1983) *Legitimität der Neuzeit*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp.

Braidotti, Rosi (1993) *Riitasointuja* (Patterns of Dissonance). Tampere: Vastapaino.

Braidotti, Rosi (1994) *Nomadic Subjects. Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Buck-Morss, Susan (1990) *The Dialectics of Seeing. Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, London: MIT Press.

Cavarero, Adriana (1994) *Space and Time in Hannah Arendt's Concept of Power*. A Paper presented in the symposium Power, Possibility, Action in Tampere, Dec. 1994.

Eagleton, Terry (1981) *Walter Benjamin or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism*. London: Verso.
Foucault, Michel (1990) *Die Ordnung der Dinge*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt/M.
Konersmann, Ralf (1991) *Erstarrte Unruhe. Walter Benjamins Begriff der Geschichte*. Frankfurt/M: Fischer.
Koselleck, Reinhart (1959) *Kritik und Krise*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp.
(1979/1985) *Futures Past (Die Vergangene Zukunft). On the Semantics of Historical Time*. Cambridge, Massachusettes, and London: MIT Press.
Lenain, Pierre (1987) *Le Temps Politique*. Paris: Économica.
(1989) *L'Instant Politique*. Paris: Économica.
Lindroos, Kia (1992) *Aika, Historia ja Nykyisyyden paradoksi. Tutkielma aikakäsityksen eri muodoista modernin kontekstissa*. Sivulaudatur-tutkielma Jyväskylän yliopiston filosofian laitokselle (not published).
(1993a) *Mut zum Unmöglichen. Histoorikko ja Poliitikko apulaisina menneen ja nykyisen; tulkinnan ja toiminnan; historian ja politiikan suhteiden eksplikoinnissa Walter Benjaminin historianfilosofisten Teesien yhteydessä*. Lisensiaattitutkimus Jyväskylän yliopiston valtio-opin laitokselle (not published).
(1993b) Walter Benjamin und Versuche zur Politik der Zeit. In: *Sprache, Denken und Kultur des Politischen*. Studia Politica Jyväskyläensis, Publications 5, Jyväskylä.
(1993c) Reading a Text Historically or Politically? A Benjaminian Approach. In: Palonen, Kari and Parvikko, Tuija (eds.), *Reading the Political*, The Finnish Political Science Association. Tampere: Tammer-Paino.
Löwith, Karl (1960) *Gesammelte Abhandlungen, Zur Kritik der Geschichtlichen Existenz*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
(1983) Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschehen. In: *Sämtliche Schriften, Bd. 2*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
Maier, Charles S. (1987) The Politics of Time. In: Maier (ed.) *Changing Boundaries of the Political*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Osborne, Peter (1994) Small-scale Victories, Large-scale Defeats: Walter Benjamin's Politics of Time. In: Benjamin and Osborne (eds.), *Walter Benjamin's Philosophy*. London and New York: Routledge.
Osborne, Peter (1995) *The Politics of Time. Modernity and Avant-garde*. London and New York: Verso.
Pocock, J.G.A. (1989) *Politics Language and Time*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
(1975) *The Machiavellian Moment*. Princeton and London: Princeton University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1989) *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*. London: Cambridge University Press.
Shapiro, Michael (1996) *Images of Planetary Danger. Luciano Benetton's Ecumenical Fantasy*. In this volume.
Sontag, Susan (1977) *Valokuvauksesta* (On Photography). Hämeenlinna: Karisto Oy, 1984.
Weidmann, Heiner (1992) *Flanerie, Sammlung, Spiel. Die Erinnerung des 19. Jahrhunderts bei Walter Benjamin.* München: Fink Verlag.
Weigel, Sigrid (1992) Passagen und Spuren des 'Leib-und Bildraums' in Benjamins Schriften. In: Weigel (ed.): *Leib-und Bildraum. Lektüren nach Benjamin*. Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag.

Tuija Parvikko

The Pariah as a Rebel

From Identity Politics to the Politics of Rootlessness

Hannah Arendt is primarily known for being a powerful advocate of political action in the public realm. However, in her view the public realm, as a common world gathering us together, has declined. Arendt's critique of modernity and longing for the common world and the public realm has recently been reactualized, because in the 'postmodern political condition' of the 1990's we do not seem to have a common world between us. We no longer sit around the same table (cf. Arendt 1958, 52-53). The postmodern 'reality' of today seems to be fragmented, heterogeneous, and lacking a common denominator between human beings. Consequently the distinction between the centre and the periphery is disintegrating; the 'postmodern actor' of today steers her/his course in a number of different realities depending on the position which she/he takes. In recent literature it has become commonplace to 'celebrate differences'. At the political level this means, among other things, that the notion of a selfidentical, transparent, autonomous and rational subject of thinking and acting has been questioned.

At the same time, however, the number of various kinds of 'pariahs' is constantly growing. Europe, like many other regions of the world, is full of people who are stateless, homeless, and have no political rights. These new outcasts and outsiders are trying to locate themselves somewhere whilst the established political struc-

tures have been designed to keep them on the outside. On the other hand, even among those 'fitting in', the gulf between the power elite and social misfits of various kinds is continuously deepening. The ever-increasing number of outcasts raises the question of whether these people have any chance of making their way through life. How can they adequately steer and control their own lives? Where are 'we' to meet these people and face up to the present situation if there is no public space for getting together? In short – as the centres of political power are dissolving, the number of new outcasts continues to increase with the gulf between first and second class citizens growing deeper all the time. The traditional concept of the political actor as a citizen with full political rights and access to the public realm is being questioned in a very concrete way. Similarly, the conception of the public realm as a self-evident and exclusive arena for political action has been rendered disputable.

During the past few years growing attention has been paid to the fact that Arendt's conception of politics is not so tied to the physical aspect of the public realm, as one may be inclined to think on the basis of the first chapters of *The Human Condition*. For example Jennifer Ring (1991, 440) argues that, at a certain point, Arendt reverses the relationship between the creation of physical location and the possibility of political action, maintaining that political action itself creates public space. According to Ring, the key to understanding the shift in emphasis is to be found in the pariah who needs a place for political action that must, at times, be portable.

In this essay I will try to show that Arendt's conception of political action does not by any means only apply to fully authorized political actors of the public realm. I am convinced that her views of the political and political action are linked to her understanding of the pariah's situation. The reasons for the pariah's exclusion from the public realm are political: it is because of some specific traits of her/his identity that she/he has been left outside the arena of politics. Consequently, she/he may rebel against this situation by claiming that she/he should be given access to the public realm just as she/he is. On the other hand, the pariah position may be seen as a critical stance which enables one to judge and act in a different

manner from that of the citizen actor in the public realm. Thus, pariah politics is not only a matter of trying to get access to a pre-existing political realm, but it also involves creating new locations of political action and transgressing the established definitions of politics.

As a combination of the critical stance on the public realm and an independent, 'different' location of action, pariah politics need not merely remain another version of identity politics. On the contrary, I will try to show that it may be possible to outline a form of pariah politics which does not aim to prove the political relevance of a certain fixed and stable identity. Instead, the purpose is to question traditional conceptions of politics which are based on the notion of fixed and stable identities. In other words, pariah politics disputes the construction of political subjectivity by means of exclusion (see Butler 1992), and aims for a situation whereby political identity is constantly challenged and redefined – remaining therefore open and unsettled.

In the following my purpose is to reread Arendt's conception of politics in the framework outlined above, suggesting that the Arendtian notion of the political actor in the public realm should not be separated from the notion of pariah as an outcast and outsider. More precisely, in order to make these conceptions useful in theorizing the political in the 1990s, they should be understood as different sides of the same coin. This means that the political actor and pariah are not necessarily different persons in every case, but rather they represent different political positions. During one's lifetime one may move, depending on one's situation, from one position to another, either voluntarily or by force of circumstance. It may even be that in certain respects or in certain situations most of us are 'pariahs'. Last but not least I will argue that on the basis of my analysis of the pariah's situation marginality and rootlessness are among the most important conditions of comtemporary politics.

I will start by discussing Arendt's conception of the pariah. After this I will outline her ideas of the public realm as a location of political action. Finally I will try to show how these seemingly opposing notions are uneasily related to one another in a tense way. This might indicate the way towards new insights into political agency.

The Dilemma of the Pariah

The concept of the pariah is not, of course, invented by Arendt. References to Jews as pariahs can be found from the early nineteenth century onwards. In addition to the writings of Bernard Lazare, Max Weber's analysis of the Jewish pariah underlies Arendt's discussion (Momigliano 1980). According to Ferenc Fehér (1986, 16), she only adopted one theoretical insight from Weber: namely the absence of political community in the long history of Jewish pariahs with the concomitant lack of political self-consciousness and general disinterest in the political affairs of their environment.

In her early writings in the 1930s and 1940s, Arendt was indeed primarily concerned with European Jews as pariahs, as stateless outsiders who did not share any political community. Among these writings there is a book-length study on Rahel Levin Varnhagen (1771-1833), a famous salonière in Berlin (Arendt 1957). It is the story of a Jewess of the period of late Enlightenment and early Romanticism who attempts to escape her pariah existence by denying and hiding her Jewish background.

Already in this text Arendt makes a conceptual distinction which constitutes the core of her overall understanding of the pariah situation. This is the distinction between *parvenu* and *pariah*. The former can be characterized as one who tries to get rid of her/his pariah status by assimilating into the Gentile society, and believing that here complete assimilation can be attained by hiding one's social roots and abandoning everything pertaining to her/his social background. The pariah, instead, takes her/his pariah status as an inescapable fact. Conscious of this status as an outsider and an outcast, she/he does not try to hide or deny it. As a pariah the outsider who is deprived of social and political rights and cast out by political community and human society at large becomes – at least potentially – a rebel.

According to Arendt (1957, 163), most of the 19th century Jews who wanted to have any say in society had no choice but to become parvenus par excellence. Yet this choice by no means afforded a full existence in society. Instead the parvenus were to discover that they had become something they essentially did not want to be-

come. The only goal they could possibly set themselves was to rise and ascend from their previous status. However, each person remained subject to the same adverse law that she/he had revolted against as a pariah: having to acquiesce in everything (Arendt 1957, 170). In other words, the parvenu could not determine the rules of assimilation but rather, be allowed to climb the ladder of social hierarchy and esteem according to the rules and standings dictated by the Gentile society. The impossibility of a true and successful assimilation was experienced by Rahel Levin herself, who, not for her own sake, gained a certain degree of social prestige only through marrying a Gentile.

The study of Rahel Levin tells a story of a vain effort to assimilate and become a parvenu. It tells of a 'diabolic dilemma' to which Rahel's life had been confined: on the one hand being deprived of everything by general social conditions, and on the other hand, being able to purchase a social existence only at the expense of sacrificing her background, and social roots (Arendt 1957, 173). It is a tragic story because only on her death-bed did Rahel admit that her attempt to become a parvenu had been a mistake and a futile effort, leading to nothing but a dishonest and shallow existence. After this lengthy pursuit she ended up experiencing a new kind of homelessness felt by those who have left their homes but have not found any place to settle neither in society nor in the human world.

I think the lesson Arendt wants to teach us by the story of Rahel Levin is that there is no personal solution to the 'Jewish dilemma'. Sooner or later at any rate, a parvenu's pursuit proves doomed. In Rahel Levin's case, her context being 19th century Prussia, Arendt does not present any other solutions as yet. It is in her writings of the 1940s that she makes herself more explicit in this respect.

The Pariah as a Rebel

In Arendt's view the tragedy of European Jewry lies in the fact that the conscious pariah is a hidden tradition, hidden because there are only few links between those great but isolated individuals who have expressed commitment to their pariah status and the rest of the Jewish community (Arendt 1944; cf. also Feldman 1978, 18). A

collective rebellion against the Gentile society remained an opportunity not to be taken and for the majority of Jews, even inconceivable.

However, even among the assimilated and emancipated Jews there have been some individuals who have not abandoned their roots. They have learned and admitted through their own experience that assimilation and emancipation can be carried through only to a certain degree. From the works of these men and women Arendt selects four portraits of pariahs, each of which, according to her, provides an alternative to the standard renderings of the history of Jewish people. These figures are Heinrich Heine's *schlemihl* and *lord of dreams*, Bernard Lazare's *conscious pariah*, Charlie Chaplin's *suspect* and Franz Kafka's *man of good will*.

According to Arendt (1944, 70-71), Heinrich Heine describes himself as the poet-king of the Jewish people, best characterized by the word *schlemihl*. Innocence is the hallmark of the schlemihl. Excluded from formal society and unwilling to be embraced by it, the pariah-poet-king turns to what entertains and delights the common people, sharing their social ostracism as well as their joys and sorrows. Heine's mockery of the prevailing state of affairs is sharp, but the problem is, according to Arendt (1944, 73), that the laughter he provokes does not kill. The pariah remains remote and unreal because, be he schlemihl or lord of dreams, he continues to stand outside the real world, attacking it from the outside and using ineffective weapons.

By contrast, Arendt's second figure is Bernard Lazare (1863-1903), a Jew whose merit was to translate the basic fact of being a Jew into politically significant terms. Living in France in the days of the Dreyfus Affair, Lazare attacks the doctrine of assimilation which forces Jews to abandon all of their Jewish characteristics. For him the inevitable result of assimilation was destruction. He emphasized the necessity of rousing Jewish pariahs to fight against the assimilated Jewish parvenus (Arendt 1944, 76; see also Lazare 1948).

Thus the conscious pariah does not, as represented by Bernard Lazare, try to conceal or do away with his Jewishness, but rather translates his status into political terms by entering the arena of

politics openly as a Jew. In doing so he becomes a rebel perforce. According to Arendt (1944, 77) Lazare's idea was that the Jew should come out as a representative of the pariah without concealment since it is the duty of every human being to resist oppression. He wanted each individual pariah to feel that they were responsible for what society had done to them. Correspondingly, every pariah who refused to be a rebel was partly responsible for her/his own position.

Charlie Chaplin, in turn, brings on the scene a little man, a tramp, incessantly harrowed by the guardians of law and order. Although he too is a schlemihl, he does not belong to the realm of dreams but lives in a world that is hard and real. In the eyes of society the tramp is fundamentally a suspect. For one who is always at odds with the world and regarded with suspicion there is no sense in arguing over rights and wrongs (Arendt 1944, 79).

In Arendt's view Chaplin's tramp as a suspect is linked to Heine's schlemihl by the common element of innocence. His innocence is not a mere trait of character, however, but rather is an expression of the dangerous incompatibility of general laws and individual misdeeds. The punishment does not always fit the crime, and so for a man who is in any case a suspect there is no necessary relation between the offence he commits and the price he pays (Arendt 1944, 80).

Arendt finally takes up the man of good will portrayed by Franz Kafka in *The Castle*. In her view (1944, 84-85), what Kafka depicts here is the real drama of assimilation. The man of good will seeks to become indistinguishable from his Gentile neighbours in the village. What he is to learn, however, is that normal existence has become something quite exceptional. So long as the village remains under the control of the castle its inhabitants can only be the passive victims of their respective 'fates'. There is no place in it for any man of good will who wishes to determine his own existence (Arendt 1944, 87).

All these types of pariahs embody conscious or rebellious elements of certain kind. Firstly the pariah may assert himself as *a critical outsider* whose principal weapon is irony (Heine). As such the pariah takes *a critical stance* on the society from which he has

been excluded. Secondly the pariah conscious of his situation does not try to hide his pariahdom but affirms it as *a location* from which he acts *as a pariah*, never forgetting or disregarding what he is. On the contrary he *politicizes his situation* by claiming access to the arena of politics as he is (Lazare). He does this aware of the fact that he is not necessarily treated in the same way as those included within society and must always be prepared for harsher treatment. He is doomed to pariahdom and the position of an outsider (Chaplin). Finally, he realizes that 'normal life' is not for him: if he attempts to assimilate and become like the others, he is doomed to failure (Kafka).

What is the goal of the pariah as a rebel? By posing this question we will shift our attention to the relationship between pariahdom and the public realm. At first sight it may seem obvious that for Arendt pariahdom and citizenship are mutually exclusive categories: one ceases to be a pariah the very moment one gains access to citizenship of the public realm. Arendt was convinced that in an ideal situation politics should go between peers and deal with the common world between them (see Arendt 1958), and not with the boundaries of the political realm and private identities. However, Arendt was also aware of the fact that in the history of humankind political citizenship has always been reserved for a limited number of people. There have always been those who have, for some reason or another, been excluded. In order to more effectively outline the political potential reflected in Arendt's conception of the relation between pariahdom and citizenship, let us consider her notion of the public realm.

Political Action in the Public Realm

According to Arendt (1958, 50-52) 'public' signifies two closely interrelated phenomena. Firstly, everything that appears in public can be seen and heard by everybody and so has the widest possible publicity. Secondly, 'public' signifies the world itself in so far as it is common to all and can be distinguished from our privately owned places within it.

More importantly Arendt draws a distinction between the realm

of appearance and the public realm. The realm of appearance is a kind of prerequisite for the public realm: "[it] comes into being whenever men are together in the manner of speech and action, and therefore predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm..." (Arendt 1958, 199). In other words, action and speech can only occur when people are together, although their appearance does not in itself constitute a public realm, since the space of appearance disappears "with the disappearance or arrest of the activities (i.e. action and speech, T.P.) themselves" (Arendt 1958, 199). Only by founding a public realm can a permanent and stable worldly location for action and speech be ensured.

Why is it that people should gather together 'in the manner of action and speech'? In my view, what Arendt has in mind here is not action as such but *politics as paradigmatic action* (cf. Arendt 1958, 9). In distinction from other human activities only action goes on directly between men without an intermediary of things or matter. In so far as action engages in founding and preserving political bodies it also creates the condition for remembrance, for history (Arendt 1958, 7-9). Thus it is action that renders life meaningful, significant and as such profoundly human. As compared to work, action has no end outside itself but actually gets meaning from giving meaning (Arendt 1958, 176).

The meaningfulness of action is comprehensible only in relation to its condition, plurality. Men do not act alone but gather together and act in concert. Thus they put themselves into a web of relationships with other people. Plurality presupposes equality and distinctiveness at the same time. Without equality, individuals would not be able to comprehend each other or communicate, and without distinctiveness, they would not have any need or reason to communicate (Arendt 1958, 175-176).

In sum, the public realm for Arendt is *a locus of political action*. People need to constitute a public space of political action in order *to deal with questions concerning the common world*. People need to gather together 'in the manner of action and speech' in order *to comprehend* one another, because they differ from each other, and understanding other people is by no means an easy task. Finally, people need to gather together and act in concert in order *to*

begin something new that has not previously existed. Ultimately, it is this profoundly human capacity to begin something new that renders action political because it carries within it the dimension of *unpredictability* (Arendt 1958, 177-178).

We can now see that Arendt does not conceive the public realm as a forever constant and unchanging physical space. Although it requires permanence it concurrently needs to be recreated all the time. It can be recreated and its permanence guaranteed only if people continuously gather together. On the other hand Arendt does not suggest that there should only be one public realm serving as a location of political action. The idea of continuous recreation of public space implies that by acting and speaking in concert people may open up new spaces of appearance and so new spaces for political action.

The Pariah Politics

In my view, Arendt's insistence on the need for a public space of appearance and political action draws both from her own experience and from historical knowledge of the fact that Jews lacked a political community: it proved to be fateful that many of them did not even care about this lack. In her later writings Arendt was primarily concerned with outlining a human organization, a model for political community which was not self-destructive, as the entire European political community had proved to be.

In this effort she never really left the pariahs behind but kept them with her, as a guiding principle in her work. The Jew remains the paradigmatic case of pariahdom, but in a number of her writings Arendt extends it to cover a variety of other figures such as the colonial native, the endless millions of stateless persons, referring even to the German social democratic party of the Weimar Republic as a pariah party (cf. Fehér 1986, 15).

As I already mentioned above, Arendt's conceptions of citizenship and pariahdom may at first sight look mutually exclusive. The rebellious pariah who fights for access to the public realm seems to cease to be a pariah the moment she/he attains citizenship. This inevitably leads to the question of whether Arendt succeeds in po-

liticizing this access to the public realm but not identities as such? Does pariah politics only involve the boundaries of the political realm and nothing else?

In a recent essay Bonnie Honig (1992, 231) goes even further than this. She argues that Arendt treats the conscious pariah's position of an outsider as a privileged site from which one can secure the distance necessary for independent critique, action, and judgement. The problems arising from an approach of this kind are twofold. On one hand the outsider position is glorified as self-evidently and in all cases better than any insider position. On the other hand, the elements of a pariah's identity are not called into question; they remain fixed and stable and as such homogenizing.

In my view, however, there is a way out of this impasse. If the notion of the space of appearance is understood as a 'gateway' to the public realm, if the public realm is understood as something which needs to be recreated all the time, and if the conscious pariah is understood as someone who attempts to do away with one of the basic characteristics of her/his identity, that of being an outsider and an outcast, the picture does not look so stable any more.

Historically, pariahs have been defined and named as such by other people. The first political move to be done is to turn this state of affairs into something that also consists of positive opportunities, as a deliberate choice clearly refusing to accept the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion set by others. In other words, this means refusing to accept the prevailing division into those who have a position within a political community or society and those who stand outside it.

This is the starting-point for the conscious pariah. Although Arendt defined pariahs as persons who do not have access to the public realm, she did leave them an opportunity for political action by becoming conscious pariahs, by gathering together as pariahs to create a space of appearance. In my view this option disputes being forever inevitably within or without a certain pre-existing and stable political community. When adopting a pariah position of this kind one starts, indeed, by affirming that one is outside. Yet as soon as the active step of choosing and manifesting ones pariahdom has been taken the possibility of a new field of action opens up as the

prevailing borderlines of politics are flouted, and a new formerly unknown 'inside' may begin to take shape. The pariah refuses to take for granted any given definitions of politics and its arena, but instead demands the right to participate in the creation of a commonly shared world.

We can now see that pariah politics concerns the borderlines of politics, but not in any fixed one-dimensional way. It is not simply a matter of getting access to a pre-established and pre-defined public space. On the contrary, by questioning any pre-given definitions of the arena of politics it shakes the foundations of prevailing conceptions of politics and its field and points towards new constellations.

Arendt does not expect pariahs to remain faithful to every trait of their pariahdom but encourages them not to forget what they once were and where they came from. She also asks them, as did Bernard Lazare, to be critical of those of their own brethren. Thus Arendt is unwilling to let pariah politics remain a re-presentation of 'what' pariahs are, or of their reified private-realm identities (cf. Honig 1992, 226). On the contrary she wants to direct attention to the acts and deeds of the political agents.

This unwillingness is based on a distinction between *what* and *who*, which Arendt introduced in *The Human Condition* (1958, 179-182). In the public realm men are not judged beforehand on the basis of what they are but only on the basis of their acts and deeds which reveal who they are. More precisely: "in acting and speaking, men show 'who' they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world" (Arendt 1958, 179). As soon as the pariahs gather together and create a space of appearance they form a public space in which they reveal who they are by their deeds and acts. They do not gather together to speak about their private identities and to reinforce them, but to begin something new, something that has not existed before. This getting together to initiate something new will immediately change their position, both in relation to their former identities and the former 'ins' and 'outs' of the society.

In other words, once the pariahs begin to do politics their *what-qualities are politicized*, made open to new interpretations. Correspondingly, the identity of political agent is constituted through acts

and deeds and may also change through new initiatives carried out on the public arena of politics.

For Rahel Levin, as for any assimilated Jew, homelessness was the negative mark of a shallow existence without a permanent location in the human world. In her case, being an outsider also meant not feeling at home wheresoever and also being in continual search for a cultural, geographical and political home. Understood in this way, homelessness is full of negative connotations which tend to nullify any initiative to act when confronted with the paralysing experience of remaining without any definite location in the human world.

It would be tempting to think that in the situation of a homesick pariah the only possibility is to turn back to her/his roots. This is not, however, what Arendt has in mind when she argues that the pariahs should not hide or deny their roots. Affirming one's roots is not the same as returning to them or remaining trapped to them. Even in the inevitable situation of homelessness one has at least one alternative course of action: instead of concealing one's roots one can opt for going beyond them in the sense suggested by Kari Palonen. According to him (1994, 123-125), the conventional paradigm of the citizen is a person (or rather a man) with economically, socially, locally, intellectually, and morally strong roots. To counterbalance this strongly rooted figure, Palonen proposes a counter-paradigm of a political actor who, if needed, is able and ready to break with her/his roots. A politician of this kind has to play with the contingency of a situation, to have an eye for chances, opportunities, alternatives, contestations, subversions and so on, even where none of them has been seen as traditional or admitted as legitimate.

Thus, lacking a definite location in the human world, being homeless or rootless may also imply an ability to break with the pre-established, self-evident and fixed conceptions of belonging and inclusion. It is not the same as hiding or denying one's roots, but rather it is an ability to politicize any trait of identity if needed in particular situation. It is my view that this is what Arendt has in mind as she presents the figure of the conscious pariah who has to fight a dual battle: one against the Gentiles and the other against her/his own brethren who take every trait of their identity for granted.

Conclusion

It is legitimate to ask if 'the postmodern political condition' means a pariah existence for us all (cf. Fehér 1986, 17). If there are no self-evident centres of political power and no commonly shared public realm for political action, we only seem to be left with commonly shared pariahdom as a lack of political community. If this is the case, does the notion of pariahdom lose its analytical potential in theorizing the political in the 1990's? Does it lose its edge, tending rather to homogenize us all as voiceless pariahs?

Because the postmodern actor of today navigates different realities according to the current situation and her/his relative position, she/he cannot pretend to be a fully authorized citizen of the public realm. She/he has to face up to the partiality of her/his position and is repeatedly confronted with the inevitable limitedness of every particular viewpoint or perspective of action.

However, the lack of a stable public realm common to all does not mean a lack of opportunities for gathering together and finding room for political action. It rather means that *the battle-field of politics is no longer one and the same*, if it ever was, and that the pariah can take her/his place and fight for political existence anywhere (cf. dal Lago 1984, 435). In other words, what is at stake in the 'postmodern political condition' of the 1990's, is not access to a given public realm, but instead *gathering together and discovering new spaces of appearance as potentially new arenas for politics*.

Thus, in the framework outlined above, the Arendtian notion of pariahdom may be understood in a new way which is not encumbered with a number of negative connotations referring to the paralysing experience of remaining excluded from a political community of the majority. It may, instead, be conceived as *a point of intersection of identity and situation*. This means that pariahdom does not remain an innate and eternally immutable set of character traits or a forever fixed position of exclusion. It is continuously defined and redefined in each new situation and subsequently shifts according to that situation.

This kind of understanding of pariahdom as *a situational outsider position* does not, however, refer to any priviliged site of ac-

tion and criticism par excellence (cf. Honig 1992). Essential here is that it provides us with a more adequate heuristic model for understanding contemporary political agency as compared to those models which build upon the notion of self-identical, transparent, autonomous, rational and strongly rooted citizenship.

By introducing the notion of the conscious pariah as a political actor in the postmodern political condition, attention is directed to *marginality* as one of the conditions of contemporary politics. In a world where the sharp borders between the centres and the peripheries have blurred, marginality is to be understood as a relative category. This means that the experience of marginality is no longer, if it ever was, only a negative and paralysing experience of remaining outside. Marginality as a condition of contemporary politics refers to the fact that no one can actually claim possession of unquestionably central position in politics: any political position is necessarily partial and limited.

The notion of the conscious pariah as a political actor also suggests that another condition of contemporary politics is *rootlessness*. A politics of rootlessness might be, I think, our first step beyond identity politics, flouting with predetermined and forever immutable identities. Instead of going back to search for lost roots, it provides us with a multiplicity of political arenas in which identities are continuously created and recreated in action.

References

Arendt, Hannah (1944) The Jew As Pariah: A Hidden Tradition. In Hannah Arendt, *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age*. Edited and with an introduction by Ron H. Feldman. New York: Grove Press, Inc. 1978.

Arendt, Hannah (1957) *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewess*. London: East and West Library.

Arendt, Hannah (1958) *The Human Condition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Arendt, Hannah (1978) *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age*. Edited and with an introduction by Ron H. Feldman. New York: Grove Press, Inc.

Arendt, Hannah (1951) *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New edition with added prefaces. San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1979.

Butler, Judith (1992) Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of "Postmodernism". In Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds.), *Feminists Theorize the Political*. New York and London: Routledge.

dal Lago, Alessandro (1984) "Politeia": cittadinanza ed esilio nell'opera di Hannah Arendt. *Il Mulino* 293, n. 3, 417-441.

Fehér, Ferenc (1986) The Pariah and the Citizen (On Arendt's Political Theory). *Thesis Eleven*, n. 15, 15-29.

Feldman, Ron H. (1978) Introduction. The Jew as Pariah: The Case of Hannah Arendt (1906-1975). In Hannah Arendt, *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age*. New York: Grove Press, Inc.

Honig, Bonnie (1992) Toward an Agonistic Feminism: Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Identity. In Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds.), *Feminists Theorize the Political*. New York and London: Routledge.

Lazare, Bernard (1948) *Job's Dungheap: Essays on Jewish Nationalism and Social Revolution*. With a portrait of Bernard Lazare by Charles Péguy. New York: Schocken Books.

Momigliano, Arnaldo (1980) A Note on Max Weber's Definition of Judaism as a Pariah-Religion. *History and Theory*, n. 19, 313-318.

Palonen, Kari (1994) The Citizen as 'Occasional Politician': A Weberian perspective. In Kari Palonen, *Politics, Rhetoric and Conceptual History. Studies on modern languages of political theory*. Studia Politica Jyväskyläensia, Publications 6, University of Jyväskylä, Department of Political Science, Jyväskylä.

Ring, Jennifer (1991) The Pariah as Hero: Hannah Arendt's Political Actor. *Political Theory*, n. 3, 433-452.

Political Science

The desire to master the entire globe – or at least the known parts of it – is as old as human civilization. Formerly, the pursuit often appeared as intentional and deliberate control over human action and life-conducts, mostly in concrete manners. In the contemporary world, however, the public and private are no longer simple physical spheres, but rather image spaces created in the visual spaces like photography, television and internet. The ancient human desire to control these spheres takes such forms as Luciano Benetton's ecumenical fantasy to overcome cultural differences and to master the entire globe.

This book attempts to find new ways of tackling the public and private by bringing together the textual and visual ways of approaching them. It seeks for new spaces for intellectual exchange in order to overcome the hierarchical distinction between center and periphery.

Contributors: Michael Shapiro, Jukka Kanerva, Kari Palonen, Kimmo Lehtonen, Ari Turunen, Juha Virkki, Marjo Kaartinen, Kia Lindroos and Tuija Parvikko.

SoPhi

ISBN 951-34-0744-6

Parvikko & Kanerva (eds.) Exploring the Chronospace of Images

SoPhi